

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL
SUPPORT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OF NORTH CAROLINA, 1900-1947

BY

VERNIE OKLE JONES

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree
of Master of Education in
the Graduate School of
Arts and Sciences
of
Duke University

1947

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When Governor Aycock was elected to office in 1898 the public schools of North Carolina were in dire need of assistance. One-room schoolhouses still dotted the State, and their terms were usually of from fifty to eighty days. One of his first thoughts was to do something to improve the public schools of the State. A campaign for better schools was started under the leadership of Governor Aycock and State Superintendent of Public Instruction, J. Y. Joyner, and a new era for public education began. The Legislature began to make direct appropriations for the schools out of State funds and the general public was aroused to action for better educational opportunities for their children.

Since that time marked changes have occurred, both in the support of the public schools and in the development of the schools.

The schools at first, depended entirely on the local units for their financial support. Dual support, from State and local sources, was inaugurated when the State started an equali-

zation program. This was later changed to complete State support of the foundation program. The present stage in this development of support is State support plus local supplement.

It is the purpose of this study to trace the development of the financial support for public education in North Carolina from 1900 until the present time, together with the changes that have occurred in the sources and in the methods of support. The developing progress of the schools with each change in the financial support of the program is also traced. The study considers the changes in the methods of supporting the schools, and their ultimate effects on the schools. As a minor portion of this study, revenue sources were analyzed as to their revenue yield.

The materials used in the investigation include State documents, public laws of North Carolina, Supreme Court decisions, unpublished studies relating to public education in North Carolina, treaties on taxation, educational bulletins, pamphlets and periodicals.

Similar studies have been made of the different phases of school support and the related fields, a few of which are briefly summarized. In 1933 H. Arnold Perry in his study, Sources and Distribution of State Funds in North Carolina, traced the development of State funds from the beginning of education in North Carolina up to 1930. His study differed from the present study in that it was primarily interested in all sources of school funds as they affect the schools today, and will influence future educational development. Another study

dealing with school finance was made by Ralph W. McDonald in 1927. This study was primarily interested in the equalization of public school support through State aid.

George D. Strayer in his study, Centralizing Tendencies in the Administration of Public Education, pointed out the effects of State support on centralizing controls. He reviewed certain changes in the curriculum, in the school building program, in the adoption of textbooks, teacher training and certification, and the general effects of centralization. This study was primarily concerned with the development of State controls and management of the public schools.

Trends in the Equalization of Educational Opportunity in North Carolina, a study made in 1936 by J. K. Long, was not concerned with the problem of financial support of education. It was interested in the equalization of educational opportunities through the centralization of control of the schools, which was brought about by the State taking over the schools in 1931.

Another study, Public Education in North Carolina, was made by the State Educational Commission in 1920. This was a comprehensive study of the educational conditions of North Carolina. The Legislature requested this study be made with a view of making improvements in the educational program. Data was collected on the educational progress, buildings and equipment, courses of study, and length of school term, teacher and instruction, administrative handicaps, and limitations and conflicting developments. Recommendations for improvements

were also included in this study.

Taxation Supplementary to State Support of Schools in North Carolina Since 1868, is a study made by Charles Fisher Carroll, Jr., in 1930. This study was concerned with only one phase of school support, that of voluntary local taxation to supplement the program already imposed by legislative enactment. It was also concerned with the influences such as political, social, and economic conditions which played a part in securing such local support. This study also showed the effects of such supplementary taxation on the public schools.

The study made by Fred W. Morrison in 1925, Equalization of the Financial Burden of Education Among the Counties in North Carolina, was made to discover the need for equalization of the financial burden among the counties, and to find ways of handling the equalization funds in the support of a minimum compulsory educational program for the State.

Dr. William Howard Plemmon's study made in 1943, The Development of State Administration of Public Education in North Carolina, was an evaluation of the forces which affected the development of the organization and administration of public education in North Carolina from 1899 to 1942. The administration of the public school system of the State had developed into a multiplicity of controls by several independent boards and this was an attempt by Dr. Plemmons to show the need for the proposed Constitutional Amendment to eliminate the many independent boards and consolidate their powers and duties into one single agency the State Board of Education.

The study by Claud Grigg in 1929, Legislative Basis for State Support and Control of Public Elementary and High Schools in North Carolina Since 1868, traces the legislative development of State support of public education in North Carolina and was concerned only with such development that led toward State support and control of the public schools.

It is hoped that the study and the information gathered here may be used to strengthen the financial resources of the public school system of the State, and that problems arising out of the increasing costs of education, teacher shortage, unstable economic conditions, and the expanding educational program may be more easily faced and attacked as a result of these data.

CHAPTER II

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA IN THE EARLY PART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

For a school system to develop to what it is today in North Carolina from that found in the State just forty-seven years ago seems incredible. The average length of a school term in this State in 1900 was seventy days. The average monthly salary for teachers at that time was less than thirty dollars, while the average training of the teachers was considerably less than that required for high school graduation. Public school libraries were almost unknown in North Carolina.¹ There was little or no equipment. More than nine hundred and fifty log schoolhouses, out of a total of 7,176, were still in use.² The total amount appropriated for school purposes from 1900-1906 by the State was \$200,000 annually. This was

¹E. J. Coltrane, and Others, Education in North Carolina 1900 and Now, Raleigh, Bynum Printing Company, 1930, pp. 12-16.

²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1900-1902.

distributed as a supplement to local funds which were raised in each county and graded school district by a general property tax of eighteen cents on each hundred dollars worth of assessed value of property; a poll tax on each male between the ages of twenty-one and fifty years old of \$1.50; a local district tax; a tax or license fee on the sale of liquors; and fines, penalties, and forfeitures counted for the remainder of the school fund that was raised.

School attendance was very poor. The children that were enrolled in school attended on an average of a little more than forty days per year, while forty-two out of each hundred children of school age did not attend any school.³ Illiteracy was appalling. There were twenty white illiterates out of every one hundred white population over ten years of age to say nothing of the condition of the Negro race, which was worse.⁴

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUPPORT

Prior to 1900 the State had made no provision for public education beyond the elementary school. In a few graded school districts in the larger cities the elementary school had been

³C. L. Coon, Significant Educational Progress in North Carolina 1900-1906, Raleigh, Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1907, p. 7.

⁴Edgar W. Knight, Public School Education in North Carolina, Durham, Trinity College, 1916, p. 333.

extended to include grades ten or eleven through local tuition. The churches provided boarding schools for girls and boys for secondary school training, and private academies were open to boys and girls who were financially able to attend them.

The conditions of education in North Carolina at the beginning of the twentieth century may best be seen as they were described in "A Declaration Against Illiteracy," and presented to the people of the State in the form of an address in 1902 by Governor Aycock, one of the greatest champions of education the State ever had. The declaration in part is:

We realize that our State has reached the constitutional limit of taxation for the rural schools, that she has made extra appropriations to lengthen the term of these schools to eighty days in the year. We realize, too, that the four months' term now provided is inadequate for the reason that more than 20,000,000 children of school age in the United States outside of North Carolina are now provided an average of 145 days of school out of every 365; that the teachers of these children are paid an average salary of \$48 a month, while the teachers of North Carolina are paid hardly \$25 a month, thus securing for all the children of our sister states more efficient training for the duties of life. And we realize according to the latest census report and the report of the United States Commissioner of Education, for every man, woman, and child of its population, the country at large is spending \$2.83 for the education of its children, while North Carolina is spending an average of 67 cents; that the country at large is spending an average of \$20.29 for every pupil enrolled in its public schools, while North Carolina is spending only \$3 or \$4, the smallest amount expended by any State in the Union.⁵

⁵Ibid., pp. 331-332.

The first constitution of North Carolina made it mandatory that the legislature provide for the establishment of schools. Article XLI of the constitution provides:

That a school or schools shall be established by the Legislature for the Convenient Instruction of Youth, with such Salaries to the Masters paid by the Public, as may enable them to instruct at low prices; and all useful Learning shall be encouraged and promoted in one or more Universities.⁶

This provision for the education in the constitution may have been the outgrowth of the practices started in Edenton and Newbern where most of the tuition fees had been replaced by grants from the towns and aid from local taxes, or the Kings' refusal to allow Queens College a charter may have been responsible for it, since three of the delegates of the constitutional committee were from Mecklenburg County, where Queens College is located, and two of these were on the board of trustees of the College. They may have wanted to prevent a like refusal by the State. Regardless of the cause for this Constitutional provision, it laid down the foundation for a tax supported public school system in North Carolina. It led to the passage of the first school law of North Carolina in 1839 out of which has come the present school system.

This law called for a vote of the people to provide a direct tax for the support of the common schools, to divide

⁶Walter Clarke, State Records of North Carolina, Laws 1715-1776, p. 984.

the State into school districts, and a plan for distributing State funds to the districts. This law, though weak, was a beginning and set the pattern that has been followed in building an educational system for all the people. The law of 1839 was the basis of local support which became the only support the schools had after the Civil War and until the beginning of the twentieth century when a State equalization fund was established to supplement local support. The act of the legislature in passing the law was one of the most important acts of any law making body the State has had according to the historian M. C. S. Noble who said this:

The law lived and grew and bore fruit. . . . Practically every county voted in favor of the tax for schools. . . . In fact; the men who gave North Carolina its first school law, weak and incomplete as it was, laid down the foundation of the greatest single service the state has ever rendered.⁷

The Constitution of 1868 made provisions for a four-months school term for every child in North Carolina between the ages of six and twenty-one years of age. Until 1900 however the State failed to support the schools except for a mere pittance that was provided by the Literary Fund, which was created in 1825 as a permanent endowment for school purposes. The sources of these funds were dividends arising from bank stock owned by the State; the dividends arising from stock in the Cape Fear

⁷M. C. S. Noble, History of the Public Schools of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 1930, p. 62.

Navigation Company and the Clubfoot and Harlow Creek Canal Company owned by the State; the unexpended balance of the Agriculture Fund; the sum of \$21,090 the Federal Government was to pay the State for money paid out to the Cherokee Indians for reservations to lands; taxes on retailers of spiritous liquors; all money paid the State for entries of public lands and auctioneers; and such other amounts of money as the legislature might appropriate from time to time. These funds were to be invested by a board known as the "President and Directors of the Literary Fund," and the income from these investments were to be used for the purposes of providing instruction of such children as the legislature may direct after the fund had accumulated enough to justify the spending of it.⁸

The fund received a big boost in 1836 when the Federal Government made its surplus revenue distribution to the several states. North Carolina received \$1,433,757.40, a large part of which went into the Literary Fund. The Legislature made other grants soon after this time to the Literary Fund, and by 1840 its resources had increased to \$2,241,480.⁹ The War between the States caused the investments to become almost worthless and the Literary Fund was so reduced that the hopes of supporting the schools by a permanent endowment were gone forever.

⁸Ibid., pp. 45-47.

⁹Edgar W. Knight, Public School Education in North Carolina, Durham: Trinity College Press, 1916, p. 95.

In 1903 the principal of the Literary Fund amounted to nearly \$200,000. Since only the interest or dividends from this sum could be used for school purposes, the amount was so small that its distribution was abandoned and the fund was converted into a permanent loan fund, to be used exclusively for building and improving schoolhouses and teacherages.¹⁰ The fund was to be loaned by the State Board of Education and the interest was used to increase the principal. Preference was given to needy rural communities and to towns with less than one thousand inhabitants. The first loan was made in August, 1903 and by 1914 ninety-eight counties had borrowed a total of \$896,022 for the building and improvement of schoolhouses.¹¹

This minor piece of legislation as it was considered at the time of its passage was a blessing to the schools of this State. The benefits derived from it during its first year of operation exceeded the expectations of its greatest supporters. This fund, being supplemented from time to time by the Legislature, supplied a force that moved public opinion toward finer, more comfortable, and better equipped school buildings for their children. An excellent feature of the act was that it gave the State Board of Education authority to regulate the construction of school plants, and stimulated improvements to the buildings.

The Constitution of 1868 made provisions for a four-months

¹⁰Ibid., p. 107.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 108, 109.

school term for all children in North Carolina between the ages of six and twenty-one, but the State failed to take part in the support of the schools until after 1900. Under an act of the Legislature it was mandatory for the local district to supply the necessary funds: therefore, due to the inability of some counties to raise the amount necessary for the support of a school term of four months without exceeding the Constitutional limits of taxation many children did not receive any education, while others in the wealthier sections of the State received as much as seven months of training.¹² A good example of the inequalities that existed in 1905 under local support is that of Yancey County where the county was able to raise only eighty-four cents per capita for each child of school age with a tax rate of forty-seven cents on each hundred dollars worth of taxable property, while Durham County raised \$4.98 per capita with a tax rate of only thirty-five cents on each hundred dollars worth of taxable property, and the city of Rocky Mount raised \$10.47 per capita with a tax rate of only sixty cents.¹³

These conditions influenced the legislature in 1899 to appropriate the sum of \$100,000 out of the State Treasury to be used to provide a four-months school term in each district and to equalize the burden of support for a minimum program.

¹²At that time the Constitutional limit was 66 2/3 cents on each hundred dollars of assessed value of property.

¹³C. L. Coon, Public School Statistics for 1904-1905, Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1906, pp. 19-25.

Although it was known as an equalization fund and it did guarantee a four-months school term for each child, it fell far short of being what the name implies. The wealthier districts were able to provide more than the minimum program. They obtained better trained teachers and even established high schools for their children, yet they received their proportionate share of the fund. The law, although badly needed, failed to correct many evils that existed as was revealed by a study made three years later which showed that thirty counties still maintained school terms of less than the required minimum of a four-months term.¹⁴

In spite of the State's appropriations for equalization purposes which were increased by the Legislature on different occasions, the greater part of the burden of support was still the responsibility of the local government. The annual cost for instructional service in 1900 amounted to \$904,412 of which the State contributed only \$100,000.¹⁵

Since the State took over a part of the burden of school support, the local school units had to meet special requirements in order to share in the distribution of the State funds. Furthermore the county board of education had to certify by

¹⁴George D. Strayer, Jr., Centralizing Tendencies in North Carolina, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934, p. 18.

¹⁵E. J. Coltrane, Education in North Carolina 1900 and Now, Raleigh, Bynum Printing Company, 1930, p. 20.

affidavit that all fines, forfeitures, penalties and other money belonging to the school fund had been applied to the use of the school and that the Constitutional tax limit had been levied for school support.¹⁶ This participation on the part of the State in the support of the schools was used, first, as a means of forcing all districts within the counties to comply with the minimum school term requirement as set forth in the constitution; and, secondly, the funds were used to adjust any burden of inequality that resulted from the compliance with the provisions of this law. The State's subsidy, as it has been called, not only served its purpose in getting compliance with the provisions of this law, but it also stimulated interest in public education.¹⁷

The local school districts as a group were able to increase their support by a very small per cent due to the tax burden and other factors. However, in the wealthier districts, the burden of support for schools was not such a problem, with only a small tax rate they could have an extended school term, and could secure the better teachers for their higher salaries. "For example, Durham County, paying an average monthly salary of \$101.76 had teachers whose training measured by the State

¹⁶Public Laws of North Carolina, 1901, Chapter 543, Section 3.

¹⁷George D. Strayer, Jr., Centralizing Tendencies in North Carolina, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934, p. 20.

... these local taxes, penalties and other
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standards is on the average more than fifty per cent better than the training of the teachers in Brunswick County, paying \$62.42 per month.¹⁸ The tax rate in Durham County at that time was 81 cents, while Brunswick County had a tax rate of \$1.19 and the North Carolina average tax rate was 96 cents.¹⁹

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SUPPORT

Prior to 1900 nothing was done by the State about education beyond the elementary grades. A few of the larger cities had established high schools before this time, but only a few of these gave instruction beyond the tenth grade. This field of secondary education had been left to private academies, church schools, and preparatory schools, which were plentiful, but the fees were so high that few boys or girls could afford to spend much time in them.²⁰

The equalization fund set up by the legislature in 1899 was continued each succeeding year and in part encouraged a considerable growth in the number of students seeking more training beyond the elementary school. New opportunities for

¹⁸Fred W. Morrison, Equalization of Financial Burden of Education in North Carolina, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925, p. 43.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 49.

²⁰Public Education in North Carolina, Report by State Education Commission, 1920, p. 5.

professional training were opened up by the State for both men and women in the establishment of the Woman's College at Greensboro in 1893; Appalachian Training School at Boone in 1903; Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School in 1893; and East Carolina Teachers' Training School in 1907.²¹ These new State institutions opened new opportunities for higher training, hence a greater demand for high school training came from the boys and girls who could not afford to attend the private schools.

With the need so obvious the General Assembly of 1905 decided to make possible a free high school education for every boy and girl of the state; therefore, it enacted the following statute:

In any township, upon petition of one-fourth of the freeholders of the township, approved by the County Board of Education, the County Board of Commissioners . . . shall hold an election to ascertain the will of the people within the township whether there shall be levied in said township a special annual tax of not less than ten cents nor more than thirty cents on the one hundred dollars of valuation of property, and not less than thirty cents nor more than ninety cents on each poll, in addition to all other taxes levied for all other purposes, to be used for the establishment of a central high school or high schools in said township, in case such special tax is voted.²²

This legislation failed to accomplish its intent, since

²¹Edgar W. Knight, Public School Education in North Carolina, Durham, Trinity College, 1916, pp. 339-352.

²²Public Laws of North Carolina, Chapter 533, Section 13, 1905.

there is no record of any high school being established under its provisions. The burden of support was placed on the local districts and had to be provided for from an ad valorem tax which was probably the main reason for its failure.

Again in 1907 the General Assembly took steps to establish a public high school system by enacting a statute to stimulate the development of such instructions in the public schools, this act provides:

If a larger amount than two hundred and fifty dollars be provided by local taxation, or by private donation, or by local appropriation, or otherwise, for the support of any public high school established and maintained under the provisions of this act, then the state shall contribute a like amount, provided, that the state shall not contribute more than five hundred dollars in any one high school: provided further, that not more than four public high schools in any one county shall be entitled, under the provisions of this act, to receive State funds.²³

This 1907 Statute did what the law of 1905 failed to do, and its effects were felt immediately. In the first year after its adoption, one hundred and forty-five rural high schools were established and only seventeen counties failed to make provision for one or more high schools by the end of the first year.²⁴ The reason it was possible for so many of the counties

²³Chas. F. Carroll, Jr., "Taxation Supplementary to State Support of Schools in North Carolina Since 1868," Unpublished thesis, Duke University Library, 1930, p. 113.

²⁴J. K. Long, Trends in the Equalization of Educational Opportunities in North Carolina, Nashville, Tenn., Peabody College for Teachers, 1936, p. 10.

to establish a State high school the first year lay in the fact that in most of these counties there was already in operation a private or community supported boarding academy. It was a simple matter to appropriate State and county funds to these established academies and in return permit boys and girls to attend without tuition charges.

In 1915 the State high school inspector's report showed that there were 214 high schools established and that only five counties in the State were without such high schools. The total high school enrollment was 8,986 in 1915, with an average attendance of 6,773, for an average school term of 156 days. The expenditures of State revenue for secondary education that year amounted to more than \$260,000 and more than \$2,000,000 had been spent by the districts for buildings and equipment for the high schools and elementary schools operated together.²⁵ Since this State aid to public high schools had been inaugurated, not only were these new schools operated for more than the minimum requirement, but they caused an increase in the terms of the elementary schools, operated in connection with them, equal to those of the high school terms.

This rapid growth of the high schools in North Carolina was not sound in certain aspects. There were 358 of these public high schools in 1918 or what were termed high schools. Not more than one-third gave four years of satisfactory high

²⁵Edgar W. Knight, Public Education in North Carolina, Durham, Trinity College Press, 1916, p. 354.

the State's high schools for the year 1913. The
total number of these schools there was already in opera-
tion. The number of schools in operation in 1913 was
the same as in 1912. The number of schools in operation in
1913 was the same as in 1912. The number of schools in operation in
1913 was the same as in 1912.

The State high school inspector's report showed

that there were 214 high schools established and that only
the number in the State were almost equal to the number.
The total number of schools in 1913 was 2,585. The average
attendance of 6,770, for an average school term of 185 days.
The expenditure of State money for secondary education that
year amounted to more than \$250,000 and more than \$250,000
had been paid by the districts for building and equipment
for the high schools and elementary schools operated together.
This State aid to public high schools had been increased,
and only were these new schools operated for more than the
previous year, but they caused an increase in the total
of elementary schools. The total in number of high schools
was the same as those of the high school term.

This would show of the high schools in North Carolina

was not found in certain respects. There were 258 of these
public high schools in 1913 or that were termed high schools.
The number of these one-termed high schools for the year of 1913 was

school instruction. Many of these so called high schools had only two teachers and four had only one teacher. This condition came about because of the ease in which a high school could be established. All the community had to do was to raise \$250 annually for instruction, either by donations, taxation or otherwise and the State would duplicate this amount.

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CHAPTER III

THE STATE ACCEPTS ITS RESPONSIBILITY

Education is a state function and responsibility. The State, unlike the churches, has no particular interests nor groups to serve. It is interested in the welfare of all the people, therefore it alone can call on every one to assist in this service, and at the same time it can command the resources of all its people where it is beneficial to the whole community. "Education has a definite place in the state and in the social order as one of the universal services by means of which the state develops its social and economic resources."¹

In practice, however, due to many factors, the control and support of education in North Carolina was left to the locality, and it remained there until 1899, when the State began taking over part of this responsibility. In that year the equalization fund was provided by the General Assembly to help

¹George D. Strayer, Jr., Centralizing Tendencies in Administration of Public Education, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934, p. 1.

support a four-months school term. Again in 1901 the State exercised its control over the schools by the legislature's mandate that a special local tax for the support of the schools be levied if the regular local tax plus state aid was insufficient to provide the constitutional four-months term.

State support and control of the schools were necessary, because of many circumstances. When the Supreme Court ruled in the famous Barksdale Case that public education was not a necessary county expense, the rural schools of North Carolina suffered greatly.² Many counties in the State with a low assessed property valuation, and others with an already high tax rate were compelled to continue their schools for much less than the required four-months term because of their inability to finance them, while the city districts, on the other hand, had an average term of eight months. This great inequality

²Barksdale, a tax payer, brought suit against the Commissioners of Sampson County to enjoin them from collecting an additional tax for school purposes which raised the tax rate beyond the Constitutional limitation of 66 2/3 cents on the \$100 valuation. The decision of the lower court was in favor of Barksdale so the Commissioners appealed the case to the Supreme Court. The court in deciding against the Commissioners held that Article V, Sec. 6, of the Constitution giving the County Commissioners the right to levy special taxes for a special purpose did not apply. "While it is the duty of the County Commissioners under Article IX, Sec. 3 of the Constitution, to levy a tax sufficient to keep the common schools open for four months in each year, yet in discharging this duty they cannot disregard the limitations imposed as to the amount of the tax to be levied." Barksdale v. Commissioners, 93 N. C. 444.

between the schools of the poorer counties and the richer districts and cities was a condition that could only be corrected by State intervention in the support and control of the schools.

SPECIAL TAX DISTRICTS

The Legislative Act of 1901 which allowed local districts to form into special tax districts to secure better schools brought about another very unsound situation as far as equality was concerned, and which later had to be abolished by State support and control. The law of 1901 removed all limits on the boundaries that a county board of education might set up for a special tax district.

With this freedom and under the impelling desire to secure better schools, the school districts in most counties have been gerrymandered beyond relief. Special tax districts lines include or exclude farms, according as the owner is favorable or unfavorable; they extend far up and down railroads, and far up and down rich river valleys--anywhere to enclose taxable property, particularly of corporations, that may accrue to the benefit of the particular district.³

The special tax districts, although they numbered only about one-fourth of all the districts, contained the bulk of the taxable property of the State. These districts were successful in securing local school support. Local rural school

³George D. Strayer, Jr., Centralizing Tendencies in Administration of Public Education, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934, p. 20.

revenue rose from \$16,000 in 1901 to \$810,000 in 1918.⁴ However, in the poor districts where this gerrymandering had taken place, many boys and girls were cheated out of their rightful share of educational opportunity.

School enrollment was increasing more rapidly than were funds for school support, due to the inability of many districts to increase school funds; therefore, it was necessary that the State come to the aid of the local districts in meeting this increase in costs due to the larger enrollments. The 1907 legislative enactment by providing a free public high school in every county, made a high school available for 100,691 high school students by 1928, while the enrollment of the elementary school was increased from 497,000 to 700,000.⁵

Since a school is no better than its teachers the State of North Carolina had to accept its responsibility in providing not only equalization of financial support in the schools, it also had to accept the responsibility of providing equality of instruction by regulating the kind of training its teachers should have. Of the 12,662 white teachers in the public schools of North Carolina in 1919-1920, the education of 580 of these was on an elementary school level only. There were 2,418 with less than high school graduation, while 1,613 had completed

⁴Public Education in North Carolina, Report of State Educational Commission, 1920, pp. 98-99.

⁵Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1908-1910, 1926-1928.

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high school and only 793 had completed four years in college.⁶ Colleges were expanded and their support increased out of State funds in order to train more teachers for work in the public schools.

STATE AID

Beginning with the Equalization Act of 1899 when the Legislature appropriated \$100,000 annually to be used for school purposes as an equalization fund, North Carolina started exercising its rightful function in education. The annual appropriation of \$100,000 was continued by the General Assembly until 1909 when it increased the amount to \$125,000 and this amount was provided each year until 1913 when the Legislature increased the appropriation to \$250,000 annually for equalization purposes to be distributed as was the \$125,000 appropriation on the per capita basis. The 1913 Legislature made another appropriation of \$375,000 to be created by applying five cents of the state property tax to an equalizing school fund. The intention of the legislature in providing this fund was to assure a six-months school term in every district of the State. A proposal to amend the constitution to extend the six-month term was submitted and rejected by the voters. However, in 1917 a similar act was passed by the General Assembly and when

⁶Public Education in North Carolina, Report by the Educational Commission, 1920, p. 44.

this amendment to the constitution was submitted to the voters the following year it was ratified.⁷

The General Assembly of 1901 changed the method of distribution of the equalization fund from that provided by the legislature of 1899. Under the former act all counties shared in the distribution of the fund, but the act of 1901 provided that only such districts as were unable to provide a four months-school term, with funds from county sources, were to share in this special appropriation.

This same law making body, in order to stimulate rural education, passed an act allowing the formation of special tax districts to be supported by an ad valorem tax:

Special school tax districts may be formed by the County Board of Education in any county without regard to township lines under the following conditions: upon a petition of one-fourth of the free holders within the proposed special school district, endorsed by the County Board of Education, the Board of County Commissioners, after thirty days notice. . . shall hold an election to ascertain the will of the people within the proposed special school districts whether there shall be levied in said district a special annual tax of not more than thirty cents on the one hundred dollars' valuation of property and ninety cents on the poll to supplement the Public School Fund, which may be apportioned to said district by the County Board of Education.⁸

The General Assembly of 1903 made additional contributions to the progress of North Carolina schools when it converted

⁷Public Laws of North Carolina, 1917, Chapter 192, Sec. 1-2.

⁸Public Laws of North Carolina, 1901, Chapter 4, Sec. 72.

the old Literary Fund into a permanent building fund to be loaned to districts for building and improving schoolhouses, and when it authorized the establishment of public school libraries.⁹

The Library Fund was set up by the Legislature in 1903 as a stimulating fund. When any school district raised ten dollars for library purposes the county was instructed to contribute ten dollars to the district for this purpose, and as soon as this was done the State would reimburse the county for what it had given. Within three years these expenditures assisted in the establishment of 1305 rural school libraries.¹⁰

As a means of stimulating interest in high school instruction in the rural communities the General Assembly of 1907 passed a statute setting up State aid for such a school, provided that a minimum term of five months be held and provided it was free to all children in the district. The State agreed to contribute a sum equal to that furnished by the district provided the amount raised by the district was larger than two hundred and fifty dollars and not more than five hundred dollars in any one school year. The results of this legislation were gratifying. The following year there were one hundred and sixty rural high schools established in eighty-five counties

⁹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1903, Chapter 567, Secs. 1-2.

¹⁰Educational Progress in North Carolina 1900-1906, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1907, p. 11.

of the State, with an enrollment of more than five thousand high school pupils. The State contribution for the establishment of the high schools that year amounted to \$45,000.¹¹

The period from 1907 until 1918 saw no major changes in the development of state support for schools. The annual equalization appropriation was continued from year to year with few changes; however, changes were soon to follow for the fall of 1918 brought with it a constitutional change in the minimum school term. The length of the school term was increased from four months to six months with provision in the constitution allowing the legislature to extend the term at its discretion. To meet the increased costs, of their extended term, larger appropriations had to be made by the State.

In 1918 the legislature undertook the task of providing funds for the support of the schools for full three months, while the local districts were to support them the other three months. This required an ad valorem tax levy of thirty-two cents by the State to meet its obligations, and limited the county commissioners to a levy of thirty-five cents on each hundred dollars of valuation.¹² If, after the latter levy was made by the county and the amount for school purposes was insufficient to provide the six-months term, then the State would

¹¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1909-1910, pp. 33-40.

¹²Public Laws of North Carolina, 1919, Chapter 2.

make additional funds available to insure the mandatory term of six months.

In order to equalize the burden of school support and at the same time insure sufficient funds from the tax levy to provide for the schools the Legislature passed the Revaluation Act. This act provided that all property within the State should be revalued under the supervision of the State Tax Commission, and that it should be assessed at its true value in money.¹³ This revaluation increased the total valuation of the real and personal property in the State from \$1,099,296,290 to \$3,156,243,202. Such an increase in the total valuation made possible a reduction in the tax rate of the State from thirty-two cents to thirteen cents and the local tax rate to fifteen cents. This reduction in the tax rate was made at a special session of the Legislature in 1920.¹⁴

At this special session of the Legislature, provision was made for an income tax amendment to the Constitution which was submitted to the people and ratified by them that fall in the general election.¹⁵ Funds derived from this source together with other State revenues, were sufficient to enable the State to discontinue the general property tax for State purposes. The State in adopting the income tax as a State source of

¹³ Public Laws of North Carolina, 1919, Chapter 84.

¹⁴ Public Laws of North Carolina, 1920, Chapter 2.

¹⁵ Public Laws of North Carolina, 1923, Chapter 93, Sec. 2.

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revenue left the general property tax for the use of the units of local government. This action together with the increased assessed valuation of general property, greatly assisted the local school units in providing increased funds for their schools.

From this new source of revenue the Legislature of 1921 appropriated \$1,400,000 to be known as the State Public School Fund. The equalization funds derived from the general property tax had been partially contributed by the counties receiving those funds, but under the new income tax plan, those receiving most of their school revenue from this fund contributed little or nothing toward it.

In 1921, soon after the legislature had removed all state taxes on property and had given this source of revenue back to the counties and local districts the post war deflation period struck North Carolina in full force. Low prices for farm products together with crop failures left the farmers in such bankrupt conditions that the legislature allowed the county commissioners to reassess the property as they saw fit, which resulted in the breakdown of the revaluation act. School expenditures rose faster in this period than did revenues, with the result that there was a deficit of more than \$700,000 for teachers salaries that year. A special session of the legislature in December 1921 authorized the state treasurer to borrow not more than \$710,000 to take care of this deficit,

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As the educational system increased more revenues were necessary in order to help equalize the burden of support. In 1920-1921 the State through the equalization fund aided forty-six counties and in 1921-1922 the number receiving this aid had arisen to sixty-three counties. The State's appropriation to this fund rose from \$757,250 in 1921 to \$1,250,000 in 1923 and to \$1,500,000 in 1925.¹⁷ The task of apportioning this fund became so enormous that the legislature in 1925 created a special commission known as the Equalization Fund Commission to have charge of and to administer this fund so as to equalize the burden of support as nearly as possible throughout the state. Again in 1927 and in 1929 there were increases in appropriations by the legislature for school purposes, the largest being in 1929 when \$5,250,000 was to be set aside annually for equalization purposes, and \$1,500,000 for tax reduction in the special tax districts.

Not only has there been an increase in the appropriation by the State for the support of the schools, there has been a larger increase in the local school revenues in the districts and counties. The following table gives the school appropriations from 1900 to 1945.

¹⁶Public Laws of North Carolina, Extra Session, 1921, Chapter 8.

¹⁷Fred W. Morrison, Equalization of the Financial Burden of Education in North Carolina, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, p. 14.

TABLE I

ANNUAL SCHOOL APPROPRIATIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION
IN NORTH CAROLINA FOR SELECTED YEARS (a)

School Year	State Appropriations	Local Appropriations	Total Appropriations
1899-1900	\$100,000	\$1,048,157	\$1,148,157
1904-1905	200,562	2,108,666	2,309,222
1909-1910	264,570	3,523,651	3,788,221
1914-1915	871,058	5,574,275	6,345,333
1919-1920	3,413,717	10,245,261	13,658,988
1924-1925	1,738,702	24,984,288	26,722,990
1929-1930	6,610,172	26,436,466	33,046,638
1934-1935	16,816,355	3,483,000	20,299,355
1939-1940	25,861,278	5,499,228	31,360,506
1944-1945 ^(b)	39,308,590	8,122,436	47,431,026

(a) Biennial Reports of the State Superintendents of Public Instruction, for school years indicated.

(b) Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1944-1945.

SCHOOLS DURING THE ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

The partial collapse of the economic system in 1930 brought a great challenge to the people of this commonwealth. Impending disaster faced the State, the school system and the whole economy as never before. The number of pupils enrolled in the public schools of North Carolina was larger than ever. The cost of education was rising, while on the other hand many communities and local districts were unable to collect their local taxes to meet their obligations. Taxes were high and many of the teachers had not been paid for all their services the past school year. In the face of these difficulties, the General Assembly of 1931 took action, that, heretofore, was considered unsound in principle and against generally accepted practices in education for over a hundred years in the United States. The State took over the entire responsibility of supporting the foundation school program of the State. This action was revolutionary but was necessary if the schools were to remain open.

The General Assembly of 1929 saw the coming disaster and tried to avert a crisis in the schools by passing certain economy measures, and at the same time increased the equalization fund to its highest peak in history. The impact of the economic collapse was too difficult though for many of the rural schools to withstand. Because of these conditions the General Assembly was unwilling to leave the schools in the hands of the districts and local units where there was such a wide variation

BOULES DURING THE ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

The partial collapse of the economic system in 1929 brought a great challenge to the people of this Commonwealth. Indeed, the situation faced the State, the school system and the people was never before. The number of pupils enrolled in the schools of this Commonwealth was larger than ever. The need for education was greater, while on the other hand many communities and local districts were unable to collect their local taxes to meet their obligations. Taxes were high and many of the teachers had not been paid for all their services for the school year. In the face of these difficulties, the General Assembly of 1931 took action, that, nevertheless, was not enough to meet the crisis and against generally accepted principles in education for over a hundred years in the United States. The State took over the entire responsibility of financing the foundation school program of the State. This was a revolutionary step but was necessary if the schools were to survive. The General Assembly of 1932 saw the coming disaster and tried to avert a crisis in the schools by passing certain emergency measures, and at the same time increased the organization and to its highest peak in history. The impact of the economic collapse was too difficult, though for many of the rural schools to withstand. Because of these conditions the General Assembly was willing to leave the schools in the hands of the local units where there was such a wide variation

in ability to support them. It, therefore, provided for State support of the six-months constitutional school term in every district of the State. This action on the part of the State did not, however, keep the districts from extending the term where there was sufficient revenue to do so, and where the local districts had not defaulted in their obligations. In most counties in the State there was already an eight-months school term.

The method of financing this program was a difficult problem. It caused the legislature to remain in session for 147 days, the longest session in the history of North Carolina. A fund of \$16,500,000 annually was provided to meet the costs of the Constitutional term and \$1,500,000 extra was provided to help support the extended term already in existence. After all other sources of revenue had been exhausted and it was still impossible to raise sufficient State funds to maintain the schools on State standards of cost, an ad valorem tax of fifteen cents was again levied by the State on the basis of the 1930 values.¹⁸ The funds made available by the Revenue Act still were insufficient to maintain the high standards, so cuts had to be made in the State school budget. A few of these cuts were made possible:

1 By a new salary schedule for county superintendents, which in most cases represented a reduction.

2 By increasing the teaching load of high school

¹⁸Public Laws of North Carolina, 1931, Chapter 10.

teachers, by one pupil in each thirty.

3 By increasing the teaching load of elementary teachers, by one pupil in each thirty-five.

4 By eliminating for two years the salary increment accruing on the basis of experience.

5 By authorizing the State Board of Equalization to make a further flat reduction on a percentage basis in the salary schedule, not, however to exceed ten per cent.¹⁹

Since 1900 the legislature has been trying to equalize the educational opportunities offered, and to equalize the burden of school support. The decision of the Legislature to take over the support of the foundation program of the schools guaranteed for the first time what was impossible under local support, an equalized educational program in every community in the State. The State Superintendent, Dr. A. T. Allen, was rather enthusiastic about this new school law when he made the following statement:

It no longer matters whether a child lives on a sand dune or on top of a gold mine so far as his educational opportunities are concerned. His rights are the same in every case. Eventually he must have the same opportunity at the hands of the State. The accident of residence or birth no longer affects him. A district cannot exclude him, he can no longer be confronted with a tuition bill, and restricted in his educational opportunities because his neighbors are unprogressive.²⁰

One important feature of the law of 1931 was that the

¹⁹Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1930-1932, pp. 7-8.

²⁰Ibid.

appropriations for the six-months term could not be diminished during the biennium, and the State Treasurer was given authority to use the credit of the State to finance the school program if the revenue should be insufficient to meet these obligations.

The next Legislature in 1933 provided for eight-months operation of all the schools throughout the State, without the levy of an ad valorem tax. To finance it, a sum of \$16,000,000 was appropriated annually for the next biennium. This appropriation was to be raised by increases in business, income, and franchise taxes, and by a general sales tax. This same Legislature terminated the State Board of Equalization and established a State School Commission to administer this State appropriation.

The law of 1933 also provided that no school district could extend its term beyond 180 days without popular vote and that the State Fund could not be supplemented without the approval of the State School Commission and approval by a vote of the people in a special election for that purpose. This law empowered the State School Commission to consolidate districts under certain conditions where it was in the interest of economy. Also, it gave the people of chartered districts, with the consent of the State School Commission, the privilege of reorganizing and reestablishing their charters and to be classified as new administrative units, provided the district had a school enrollment of 1,000 or more pupils.²¹ By the

²¹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1935, Chapter 562, Sec.

for the administrative term could not be diminished. The State Treasurer was given authority to issue bonds for the purpose of financing the school program. It was also provided that the State Board of Education should have the right to make recommendations to the Governor regarding the appointment and removal of school officers.

The law of 1903 provided for eight-month terms for all the schools throughout the State, without the exception of the normal schools. The Finance Bill, a sum of \$10,000,000 was appropriated annually for the next minimum. This appropriation was to be raised by increasing the business, income, and the sales tax, and by a general sales tax. This same law also provided for the State Board of Education and a State School Commission to administer the State

The law of 1903 also provided that no school district could extend its term beyond 100 days without popular vote and that the State Fund could not be expended without the approval of the State School Commission and approved by a vote of the people. It also provided for a special election for that purpose. This law also provided for the State Board of Education to consolidate the schools and districts where it was in the interest of the people. It gave the people of scattered districts the right to petition the State School Commission, the citizens of the district and establishing their charter and to be established as new school districts, provided the district had a population of 1,000 or more people. By the

abolition of the ad valorem tax the law swept away approximately a \$10,000,000 local tax burden for schools that was levied in the special tax districts.

There were certain requirements to be met in the reorganization of the school program before teachers were allotted or before a new school could be established. An average daily attendance of sixty pupils was required for the establishment of a high school and no elementary school could be established with less than twenty-five pupils, unless geographic or other conditions made it impractical to provide for them otherwise.

A State purchasing agency was organized to act for the State School Commission and administrative units in the purchase of equipment, supplies, and other materials to be used in the interest of the schools. Another function taken over by the State at this time, was the operation of all facilities for the transportation of public school children. In all these, the State has effected a big economy and saved the tax payer much expense.²²

The Legislature of 1935 received little praise for the miserly appropriations to the public schools. The fund was larger than that provided in 1933, but the school authorities knew that it was not large enough. The same policy of raising funds without an ad valorem tax, was continued for another two years.

²²Public Laws of North Carolina, 1933, Chapter 562, pp. 516-531.

The period from 1935 until 1942 was one of increasing interest in public education on the part of the public. The reaction of the Legislature to the wishes of the people was shown by the increased appropriations and provisions for a twelve-year program and a nine-months school term. The State appropriations were increased from \$20,031,000 in 1935 to \$29,454,233 in 1942.

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

Good buildings and good equipment are considered some of the conditions essential to good education. Recognizing these facts, the General Assembly of North Carolina undertook, as early as 1903, to improve the school plants of the State, by creating a permanent loan fund.¹ This loan fund was established from the money in the old Literary Fund and funds from the sales of swamp lands, belonging to the State Board of Education. This fund was placed under the control of the State Board of Education to be loaned by them to County Boards of Education, and by them, in turn, to the school districts for building purposes.²

The early history of the public school building program

¹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1903, Chapter 567, Sections 1-5.

²J. Y. Joyner, The Story of Five Years of Progress in Public Education in North Carolina.

presents a rather dark picture of education in the State. In 1900 there were 8,094 school districts in North Carolina, of these, eight hundred and forty were without any kind of a school building.³ The schools, such as they were, in these districts were conducted in churches and unused dwellings. There were 1,190 log huts still being used for school purposes, and the majority of the 7,391 schools were being taught in one-room buildings. The average value of the schoolhouses in North Carolina at that time was \$159.00.⁴

The buildings of that day were built when economy was necessary. The one-room, box-like structures differed little from each other except in size. The exterior of these weather-beaten, unpainted and poorly kept houses was little less inviting than the interior with its dingy walls, stuffy atmosphere, and unattractive furniture. Heat was furnished by a rust covered stove in the center of the room, while rich pine was used for fuel, making the room uncomfortably hot one moment and cool a little later. There were no inside toilet facilities, and the out-door privies were usually filthy and very unsanitary in most instances. Drinking water had to be secured wherever it could be found, and there were no provisions for washing the hands. The teachers served as both teachers and

³The Womans' Association for the Betterment of Public Schoolhouses in North Carolina, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1905, p. 12.

⁴State School Facts, Volume V, Number 4, November 1928.

janitors in too many cases, and it was left up to them to see that the fuel was prepared and the grounds beautified. The result being that, in most instances, the school buildings and grounds were very unattractive.

The legislature had not seen fit to accept any of the responsibility of financing the construction and repair of school buildings, except through the State Literary Fund. However, it did provide for the approval of plans for the construction of buildings by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction when it passed the following act in 1903:

. . . The building of all new schoolhouses shall be under the control and direction of and by contract with the County Board of Education; . . . (Provided further), that they, shall not be authorized to invest any money in any new house that is not built in accordance with plans approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the County Board of Education, and that all contracts for buildings shall be in writing and all buildings shall be inspected, reviewed, and approved by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction before full payment is made therefor.⁵

The responsibility for financing the building of the schoolhouses was placed in the hands of the county boards of education and the county commissioners. The money loaned by the State for building purposes had to be repaid by the end of ten years in annual installments.

The period from 1900 to 1910 was one of rapid growth in the construction of new schoolhouses. The loan fund, estab-

⁵Public Laws of North Carolina, 1903, Chapter 435, Section 4.

lished by the General Assembly, stimulated action and interest on the part of rural education; more than 3,450 new school buildings were built during this period. Rural school property increased in value from \$1,146,000 to \$3,094,000. The new buildings, however, were like so many others that had been built before. They were built for the present and had to be replaced too soon due to their inadequacy, which was a great burden to the tax payers.⁶

BONDS AND SPECIAL FUNDS

The legislative enactment of 1913, permitting counties to issue bonds for building schoolhouses upon approval by a vote of the people, was another law with far reaching effects on the school building program. Between 1913 and 1918 more than 1,900 new rural school buildings were erected. More than \$2,645,000 was expended for capital outlay, while the value of school property rose to \$24,057,838.⁷

Special funds for building schoolhouses in this State for Negro children, were provided in 1915 by Julius Rosenwald, of Chicago. He gave three hundred dollars for each building when an equal amount was provided by donations and/or county authorities. As a result of this fund the schools for Negroes

⁶State School Facts, Volume V, Number 4.

⁷Ibid., Volume XII, Number 9.

of the State were greatly improved. Workrooms for the boys and girls were provided as well as places for recreation and play. About 1,500 class rooms were provided at an expense of \$2,797,210 during the first decade after the establishment of this fund.⁸ The Negroes themselves contributed, out of their slender earnings, almost a half million dollars for the erection of public schoolhouses.⁹ In many instances these contributions were real sacrifices imposed upon themselves in order that educational opportunities for their children might be improved. It was not uncommon for them to give a third or more of the total cost of a building.

The 1919 session of the Legislature set aside two thousand dollars, annually, for drawing up school building plans to be furnished free of charge to the districts and for inspections and other uses which might make for larger, better built and better equipped school buildings.¹⁰ The same Legislature also made provisions whereby the county could increase the budget by one-fourth of the amount budgeted for teachers' salaries for building purposes. This Legislature manifested more interest in a modern school building program than any before this

⁸Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1924-26, p. 65.

⁹Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁰Public Laws of North Carolina, 1920, Chapter 91, Section 6.

time. It provided, in addition to the above, that all poll taxes, fines and other public school revenues, unless otherwise designated, should be credited to a building fund and if this building fund was still inadequate, the county board of education was permitted to raise the tax rate by three cents in order to secure the amount deemed necessary.¹¹

Until 1920 there was a great variation between the average value of buildings in cities and those in the rural districts. Even in the rural sections of the State this inequality was very great. The average value of the rural schoolhouse was eight thousand dollars while that of the city was more than ten times that amount or \$86,000.

The Legislature of 1921 did much to remedy this situation by voting \$50,000,000 of State bonds for the improvement of the highways, which made possible the consolidation of schools and the abandonment of small schoolhouses. This consolidation movement demanded larger and more modern buildings and equipment. The provisions for a Special Building Loan Fund of \$5,000,000 by the same Legislature, and another \$5,000,000 was added two years later, the proceeds of which were loaned to the counties to erect school buildings, were a great boost to the building program in the rural areas, since they could borrow money from the State at a low rate of interest. An interesting feature of this law was the provision allowing the

¹¹Ibid., Section 3.

Fund to be used only in the construction of school buildings with five rooms or more.¹²

One of the most important laws of the extra session of the legislature in 1924 was an amendment to the school laws of 1923, which gave the county commissioners the right to pledge the credit of the county for funds to be used in the erection of school buildings without a vote of the people, it provided:

That whenever the county board of education of any county shall petition the county commissioners of said county that it is necessary, in order to provide a building or buildings to carry on a six-months school in their county, and the locations and plans for such buildings, as proposed, has been approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the county commissioners may in their discretion, without submitting the issue to a vote of the people, borrow such sums of money as may, in their judgment, be necessary to erect or repair such building, or buildings, and the commissioners are empowered and authorized to issue serial notes of the county or serial bonds of the county as provided for in section two hundred and sixty-seven, Article twenty-three, chapter one-hundred thirty-six, Public Laws of nineteen hundred twenty-three.¹³

This measure did much toward the improvement of the educational facilities of the State, but it was overworked. A few counties abused this privilege and went so far into debt that when the financial crisis came in 1931 they were unable to meet their obligations. As a result the General Assembly passed a

¹²Ibid., 1923, Chapter 147, Section 3.

¹³Ibid., Extra Session, 1924, Chapter 120, Section 271.

law forbidding the local units to levy a tax to supplement the State school program without the approval of the people by vote in an election for that purpose.¹⁴

In 1925 the General Assembly appropriated \$7,500,000 more for the building loan fund, making a total of \$17,500,000.¹⁵ As a result of the laws providing these loan funds a great building program was carried out in the State, with many modern and well equipped school plants being provided the children of the rural sections. The average value of the schools had risen from \$159 in 1900 to \$14,381 in 1926. While the total value of school property had risen from \$1,146,000 to \$93,892,671 during the same period of time.¹⁶ There was a great decrease in the number of one-teacher schools. The number of log school-houses was reduced to 27 in 1927, and there were 940 consolidated schools. This reduction tended to equalize educational opportunity, but under the present method of financing the school building program there will always be great inequalities due to the concentration of wealth in the city districts. In 1929 the average value of school property per city child was \$293, the corresponding value for the rural child was \$120.¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid., 1933, Chapter 562, Section 4.

¹⁵State School Facts, Volume V, Number 4.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., Volume XII, Number 9.

law... the local... to have a tax to supplement the... without the approval of the people by vote... for that purpose.

...the Governor... \$7,500,000 more... \$17,000,000.

...the result of the... was carried out in the State, with many reforms... school plants being provided the children of... The average value of the schools had risen

from \$200 in 1900 to \$24,000 in 1920. While the total value... had risen from \$1,146,000 to \$97,800,000.

During the same period of time... There was a great decrease... of one-teacher schools. The number of one-teacher schools

was reduced to 17 in 1921, and there were 940 consolidated... This reduction tended to equalize educational

opportunities, but under the present method of financing the... building program there will always be great inequalities

in the representation of wealth in the city districts. In... average value of school property per city child was... the total value was \$100,000,000.

...1923, Chapter 465, Section 1.
...Volume 7, Number 4.

...Volume III, Number 2.

The period from 1930 to 1936 was one of little activity. The depression caused a halt in the school building program, but under the Federal Works Program, Public Works Administration and Works Progress Administration, this activity was stimulated by Federal grants and loans.

By 1939 the number of one-teacher schools had decreased to 880 and there were more than 1,400 schools having twelve or more teachers. The total number of schoolhouses decreased from 5,825 in 1930 to 4,324 in 1939. On the other hand the value of the buildings increased. Out of a total of 4,324 school buildings in the State 1,670 were of brick construction. The following table shows that there has been a decrease of more than three thousand school buildings from 1900 to 1944, while there has been a huge increase in the value of school property and in the average value of property per child enrolled in the State schools.

BUILDING PROGRAM RESTRICTED

The second World War severely restricted the construction of new schoolhouses for its duration. Labor and materials required for building purposes were deemed necessary or essential to the war effort. School lunch rooms, vocational buildings, and a few others were approved as more or less essential or highly desirable, but other than these, only replacements were possible. This curtailment in the construction of school plants and the inability of the local school units to carry on

TABLE II
SCHOOLHOUSES AND SCHOOL PROPERTY IN NORTH
CAROLINA, 1900 TO 1944^(a)

Year	Number of Houses	Value of School Property	Average Value of Schoolhouses	Average Value Per Child Enrolled
1900	7,166	\$ 1,695,250	\$ 158	\$ 4.14
1910	7,609	5,862,965	708	11.27
1920	7,994	24,057,838	1,978	34.80
1930	5,664	112,930,371	19,938	124.01
1940	4,207	118,897,874	28,258	133.46
1944	3,937	128,895,780	32,740	154.62 ^(b)

(a) State School Facts, Volume XII, Number 9.

(b) Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, Part I, p. 80.

more than an emergency building program, has caused the State Literary Fund to have the largest balance of unloaned funds since the fund was created. The balance on hand as of July 1, 1944 was more than a million dollars.¹⁸

Since 1933 when the State accepted the responsibility of furnishing a greater part of the funds necessary for the current expenses of the school program, a State supported school building program has been in the minds of many educators. Two bills were introduced into the General Assembly of 1947 which would have provided funds from State sources to finance the school-building program in North Carolina, but these failed of enactment.¹⁹ Public sentiment is growing in favor of a State supported building program, but the demand for a teachers' salary raise at the last session of the legislature left such a program for future consideration by the lawmaking body.

State Superintendent Erwin, in his recommendations to the legislature in 1945 suggested that the State participate in the building program. His recommendations were:

In our post-war educational program, the State should make plans to facilitate orderly programs of school plant construction and improvement. This can be done by the adoption of measures along the following lines;

¹⁸Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, Part I, p. 80.

¹⁹North Carolina Public School Bulletin, May 1947, p. 3.

1 The enactment of legislation that will make it possible for the local units of the State to borrow funds and to build up reserves for school plant needs consistent with the provisions of the Constitution.

2 The creation of loan funds bearing a low rate of interest that will be economically and readily available for school building programs.

3 Legislation that will permit local units to accept grants and aid from Federal or other sources.

4 Stimulation of necessary school building programs by the fullest cooperation of the State.

5 The maintenance, improvement, and expansion of our school building facilities is a major endeavor of the State and local officials.²⁰

Since the cessation of hostilities, the scarcity and high prices of building materials and labor have caused the postponement of much building indefinitely. The cost of school building materials and labor has risen sixty-five per cent since 1939, while the cost of the building has risen 105 per cent in the same period of time.²¹ The contractors have set their prices to cover any loss that may occur due to the difficulty of obtaining needed materials once the building is under construction.

The type, location, and adequacy of the school plant very definitely help determine the school organization and efficiency of the educational program. If education is a State function, the State should assume responsibility in the school building

²⁰ Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, p. 111.

²¹ School Executive, April 1947, Volume 66, Number 8, p. 38.

program. The State, with its resources is able to command the best trained personnel in schoolhouse planning and construction. If the entire school construction program was under State supervision and support, the State would be in a position to obtain the best in school building at a minimum cost. Unless the services of such individuals, who are familiar with the major problems of school building and planning, are employed, many of the anticipated new school plants may be planned and built without adequate facilities.

Children, regardless of the wishes of the parents, are compelled by the State to go to school; therefore, it should be a State responsibility to see that these children are properly housed. Mr. W. F. Credle, a member of the staff of the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, in pointing out the need for State responsibility in a school building program stated that the public is demanding and is willing to pay for it. He made the following suggestions for improving the present conditions:

1. An evaluation of the existing plants
2. A determination of school site needs
3. A statement of the educational program suited to the needs of the school units
4. A determination of the kind and extent of building facilities needed
5. A detailed analytical statement of the educational specifications of the building to guide the architect in his planning
6. A determination of the school units' ability to pay for, and the best means of financing the recommended program
7. The elimination of waste and excess costs
8. A completed plan peculiarly suited to the units' needs and worthy of approval in its every detail

9 A completed building wholly in keeping with the plans and specifications upon which the contracts are let.²²

The needs of North Carolina's schools today for adequate school plants and facilities are self evident. Buildings have deteriorated during the war, when repairs and replacements could hardly be had. More space is needed for the expanding program, and larger buildings are needed to take care of the increasing school population. In the recommendations of the State Planning Board to the people, adequate school buildings and school equipment for all children was at the very top of the list.²³

The inequality of educational opportunities existing between the districts is not desirable, yet under the present means of financing the school building program there is no hope of remedying the situation. Although the law permits the counties to go into debt for school building improvements up to five per cent of their total assessed property valuations, none of the counties have yet gone into debt to that extent for such purposes. This provision in the law does not alter the situation as far as equality of educational opportunity

²²W. F. Credle, "The State's Responsibility in School Building Programs," Peabody Journal of Education, Volume 23, Number 6, pp. 333-334.

²³State Planning Board, "North Carolina's Children," Jan. 1947.

in the school program is concerned. Thirty-five of the counties in the State could not meet their building needs even if they should reach the legal debt limit.²⁴

²⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER V
CHANGES IN THE MINIMUM SCHOOL TERM FROM
1900 TO 1943

It is difficult to say just what constituted a minimum school term for the public schools of North Carolina in 1900. According to law, a four-months school term for every district in the State, as was mandated by the Constitution of 1868, was supposed to be the minimum school term. The average term, however, was only seventy days, and for many children who desired an education the school term was much less than that.¹ Compulsory attendance laws had not yet been passed and many children did not receive the full benefit of the existing school terms, while still others never went to school at all.

Only thirty districts out of a total of 8,042 in the State, all urban, levied a special tax for the support of the schools, while more than 950 public school districts were

¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1900-1902.

without schoolhouses of any kind.² In order to guarantee a minimum term of four months, required by the Constitution, the State Legislature of 1899 appropriated out of its revenue a sum of \$100,000 to help those districts unable to finance the required minimum program.³

With the aid of the State's contribution as a stimulus the average school term in North Carolina was increased from seventy days in 1900 to 101 days in 1910, but the minimum term of seventy days was all that was provided in a few of the less able communities. The legislative enactment of 1901, allowing the rural districts to vote a special tax of 30 cents on each \$100 worth of property to improve their school facilities and to extend the term, boosted the length of the school term to more than six months in most of the local tax districts.⁴ It also increased the value of school property in the State from \$1,726,000 in 1900 to \$5,862,969 in 1910. The total number of teachers in the State increased from 8,320 in 1900 to 11,162 in 1910.⁵

Although the average length of school term increased in

²Edgar W. Knight, Public School Education in North Carolina, Trinity College Press, Durham, N. C., p. 330.

³See page 26.

⁴Public Laws of North Carolina, 1901, Chapter 4, Section 72.

⁵Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1908-1910.

North Carolina from 101 days in 1910 to 127 days in 1920, the minimum term was not increased until the school year of 1919-1920 then to only 120 days.⁶ These figures may be misleading, since they do not show the status as it was because they represent the average school term for both races combined. The school terms of the colored schools in most instances in the rural districts were not extended as were the terms for the white schools, nor were the rural school terms of either race equal to those of the city schools. Table III gives a comparison of the length of terms in days for the rural and city schools of both races.

During the period from 1910 to 1920, improvement in the educational situation was influenced by several legislative acts which were:

1. The act of 1913 improving the compulsory attendance law. Children between the ages of eight and twelve were required to attend school at least four months each year.⁷

2. The act of 1913 prohibiting children under twelve years of age being employed in factories during the school term.

3. The permissive laws of 1915, permitting the counties to issue bonds to finance school buildings upon the approval

⁶State School Facts, Volume V, Number 4.

⁷Public Laws of North Carolina, 1913, Chapter 173, Section 1.

TABLE III

LENGTH OF SCHOOL TERMS IN DAYS FOR RURAL AND CITY
SCHOOLS FOR WHITE AND COLORED RACES^(a)

Year	White			Colored		
	City	Rural	Average	City	Rural	Average
1904-05	170	85	94	168	81	91
1909-10	175	93	105	165	82	94
1914-15	170	116	125	168	102	113
1919-20	170	126	135	165	118	127
1924-25	177	138	148	172	125	136
1929-30	178	152	159	174	129	141
1934-35	162	159	160	162	158	159
1939-40	174	160	164	171	160	163
1944-45 ^(b)	180	180	180	180	180	180

(a) Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for years indicated.

(b) Estimate since figures were unavailable and since appropriations were made for nine months.

by a vote of the people.⁸

4. The act of the General Assembly of 1917 providing for the submission to the people of a Constitutional amendment to extend the minimum school term to six months.⁹ This amendment was approved and put into effect during the school year of 1919-1920.

A rapid expansion of educational opportunities came during the decade immediately following the end of World War One. This was a period of consolidation and building. Although the number of school buildings actually decreased during this time the value of public school property rose from \$24,057,838 in 1920 to \$93,892,671 in 1927.¹⁰ The average length of school term rose to 146 days while that for the white race was 152 days. The required minimum term of 120 days was no longer a maximum term for the vast majority of pupils. A few of the districts in the rural areas had been unable to follow in the movement for better educational opportunities for all the children of the State, and were still operating only the required number of days.

The improvement in transportation facilities made possible the consolidation of schools, therefore many of the one-room school buildings were eliminated. The number of schools was

⁸Ibid., 1915, Chapter 81, Section 1.

⁹Ibid., 1917, Chapter 129, Section 1.

¹⁰State School Facts, Volume IV, Number 16.

reduced by this consolidation but this meant no reduction in the number of teachers. The total number of teachers for the State in 1927 had increased to 23,596.¹¹

Since 1900 the minimum school program has remained static for only short periods of time. The people of the State have not been satisfied long at the time with a school system that failed to give their children the training and educational advantages being offered the children of other sections of the country. They were reluctant at first to tax themselves for what was deemed unnecessary, but once they saw the advantages of the better educational systems of other states they were willing to sacrifice for their children. For these reasons the minimum school program had a gradual growth until 1933.

The climax to this growth came at a time when it seemed that the State's public schools would have to retrench. When almost every other undertaking was losing ground, the Legislature of 1933 said the schools must not fail. It provided not only a minimum term of eight months, it also made provisions for State support of the schools for that period of time. In trying to keep expenses down and still maintain the schools, the Legislature for the first time made the minimum term the maximum term in this State for most of the schools by providing that:

¹¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1926-1927, p. 232.

1 All school districts; special tax, special chartered or otherwise, as now constituent for school administration or for tax levying purposes, are hereby declared non-existent and it shall be unlawful for any taxes to be levied in said districts for school operating purposes except as provided in this act. . . .

That the county board of education in any county administrative unit and the board of trustees in any city administrative unit, with the approval of the tax levying authorities in said county, or city administrative unit and the State School Commission in order to operate the schools of a higher standard than that provided for by State support, but in no event to provide for a term of more than 180 days, may supplement any object or item of school expenditure: provided before making any levy for supplementing State budget allotments an election shall be held in each administrative unit to determine whether there shall be levied a tax to provide such supplemental funds and to determine the maximum rate which shall be levied. . . .

Provided that no county, municipality, or other unit, may vote to extend the term of school beyond the eight months term, so long as such county municipality, or other unit, is in default in the payment of its bonds or other evidence of indebtedness.¹²

This act making it unlawful to levy a tax without the approval of the people by vote held for that purpose was enough to prohibit any supplement to the State program at that time except for one or two units. The depression had such an effect that the majority of the people did not want to be taxed any more at that time. The eight-months term, therefore, became a maximum as well as the minimum program for the majority of the children until the Legislature of 1943 passed a statute providing for a school-term of nine months.¹³ The law passed in

¹²Public Laws of North Carolina, 1933, Chapter 562, Sections 4 and 17.

¹³Ibid., 1943, Chapter 255, Section 2.

1933 prohibiting the levying of taxes for supplemental purposes without a vote of the electorate of the district, and for the levying of taxes for the extension of the term beyond the nine months now supported by the State remains applicable.¹⁴ These provisions made the minimum program the maximum as to the length of term, and froze the building program in most school units so that what was a minimum was also the maximum since it is almost impossible in a great many of the administrative units to carry an election to raise funds for school purposes by a tax levy. Finally in 1943 the goal set by many educators was reached when the Legislature extended the school term to 180 days for all children of the State.

The one-teacher school has decreased until there are only twenty-seven such schools for white children today. The school buildings and equipment are far below what the minimum for a good school system should have. The compulsory attendance law was amended so as to include all children between the ages of seven and sixteen in 1945.¹⁵

The provisions made by the Legislature for State support of a minimum program of education partially fulfilled, the Constitutional mandate for equal educational opportunity for all the children of the State. And the adoption of the nine-months school term was the fulfillment of one of the plans of those who labored so hard for a better school system.

¹⁴Ibid., Section 1.

¹⁵Ibid., 1945.

CHAPTER VI

EVOLUTION OF TEACHERS' SALARIES

In 1900 the sentiment for good schools in North Carolina was growing faster than the available funds to support them. Charles B. Aycock was elected governor of the State and he put forth every possible effort to improve the public schools. The schools of North Carolina were far below the average for those of the United States. The average salary of the teachers in North Carolina was about \$25 per month, for a period of four months each year, as compared with \$48 per month for the Nation.¹

The program of public school education in the State was strengthened in 1904 by increasing the salary of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and by increasing public sentiment in favor of better educational opportunities for all school children. Public support of the schools was secured as

¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1900-1902, p. 105.

never before, due to a campaign inaugurated by the State Department of Public Instruction to inform the general public of the existing conditions of the schools of that time, and the importance of a better school program. This was accomplished mainly by publication of educational pamphlets and bulletins which were distributed throughout the State.

One of the outstanding facts of the progress in rural education from 1900 to 1910 was that expenditures for teachers' salaries were doubled. The average salaries of county superintendents increased from \$243 per year to \$907.² This progress in salaries of teachers and superintendents came about largely as a result of the momentum given through the campaign of Aycock and his helpers at the beginning of the decade.

In 1910, at the close of the first decade of the century the public school system of North Carolina presented a very different appearance from that of 1900. Provision had been made for better training of teachers through normal schools and institutes, and for better salaries. The annual expenditures for elementary rural schools had more than doubled. Even though the salaries of the white teachers had greatly increased the salaries of the Negro teachers remained about the same during this decade. They were paid an average monthly salary of a little more than twenty dollars.³

²Ibid., 1898-1900, p. 154; 1908-1910, p. 151.

³Ibid., 1908-1910, p. 185.

A study of the statistics of teachers' salaries from 1914 to 1918 shows that, the principals were not paid high salaries, yet, there was a great disparity between teachers' salaries and those of the principals. In 1914 the principals received an average of about one thousand dollars per year while the teachers received only an average of two hundred and fifty dollars per year, and in many instances the principals were not better trained than the teachers, regardless of this fact, they received four times as much for their services.

During and following World War I many teachers left the schools to take work in other fields where training and ability were given more recognition and rewarded accordingly. At this time there was no State salary schedule for teachers in North Carolina. Reviewing the salaries paid teachers and superintendents one can readily see why the unsatisfactory conditions prevailed for so long in the public schools of this State. The real reason was the low salaries paid.⁴ School work may be fairly satisfactory under adverse conditions if superior teachers are employed, but the superior teacher could not be obtained under the salaries as paid by the public schools from 1900-1920. Table IV gives these average salaries.

The year of 1919 was the beginning of a new era in the profession of teaching in North Carolina and one reason for this was the greatly increased salaries of teachers. For the

⁴A Report by the State Educational Commission, Raleigh, Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1920, pp. 48-49.

TABLE IV

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND
SUPERINTENDENTS FOR SELECTED YEARS, 1900-1945^(a)

Year	White Teachers	Negro Teachers	Superintendents
1900	\$ 90	\$ 76	\$ 243
1905	148	105	696
1910	193	118	907
1915	251	149	1,191
1920	516	298	1,884
1925	835	455	3,125
1930	954	538	3,465
1935	621	415	1,957
1940	938	690	2,900
1945	1253	1259	3,303
1947-48	1900 ^b		

(a) Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1900-1945.

(b) This is an estimate average annual salary for the teachers of North Carolina for the school year 1947-48, by Benjamin Fine, who made a nation wide survey of teachers' salaries for the New York Times. The average is for all teachers but not superintendents. Mr. Fine's estimate is too low. He evidently failed to take into consideration the supplement paid by more than fifty city and county administrative units. According to Mr. Hunter, of the State Department of Education, the average teachers salary should be more than \$2,000.

first time in the history of the State, teachers were paid salaries, on a comparable basis with that of other positions. The average annual salary paid city teachers in 1919-1920 was \$688, and to rural teachers \$405. This was an increase of \$151 in the average salary of city teachers and \$140 increase in the average salary of rural teachers. The total increase paid for teaching and supervision in 1919-1920 was about sixty-five per cent over that of the preceding year. The total expenditures for all school purposes increased from \$6,768,062 to \$12,214,258, nearly one hundred per cent in one year.⁵ The Legislature of 1920 made a step forward when it guaranteed higher salaries for longer and more specialized training. This act provided for the adoption of a uniform graduated salary schedule for all teachers, principals and superintendents, based on certain prescribed standards of training.⁶

In 1921 a new salary schedule was approved, although it did not provide for a large increase from the State it did place emphasis on professional fitness, and thus encouraged those less qualified to try to rise in the profession. The new salary schedule gave the best qualified teachers, with four

⁵Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1918-1920, p. 168.

⁶Public Laws of North Carolina, 1920, Chapter 91, Section 4.

years experience, about \$1,200 a year.⁷

Several thousand teachers, with low certificates, at once returned to school to improve themselves for teaching, which was very gratifying to the school authorities of the State. The State made provision for the teachers to improve their certificates by outlining a summer school program, whereby they could raise their certificates and continue teaching, the number of teachers who attended summer schools was the most encouraging sign that had ever been shown in teacher preparation in the State.⁸

The statistics for the biennium from 1920 to 1922 indicate that there was a consistent increase in expenditures for all school purposes, and the greatest increases continued to be for teachers' salaries and for building.⁹ In the school year 1920-1921 the increase in expenditures for salaries for teaching and supervision was \$3,349,727 which was more than the total expenditures for school purposes in 1910. The increase in 1921-1922 for teaching and supervision was \$1,971,972.¹⁰

The schools of North Carolina enjoyed a period of expansion

⁷E. C. Brooks, Administration of the Public School System, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1921, pp. 7, 8.

⁸Ibid., p. 6.

⁹Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1920-1922, p. 109.

¹⁰Ibid.

from 1920 to 1930. About three times as much money was spent on education by the State in 1930 as in 1920. However, the salary schedule set up for teachers in 1920-1921 remained the same until 1931. During this time teachers salaries gained in purchasing power, as did the earnings of other economic groups. However, the average income of teachers in 1928 was lower than that of any other group in the State except that of the wage earner.¹¹

There was a wide difference between the salaries of high school teachers and of the elementary teachers as was shown by the report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the years 1928-1930. Here it is noted that the elementary teachers received an average annual salary of \$728 for 1928-1929 while the high school teachers' average annual salary was \$1221 for the same period of time.¹² This disparity between the salaries of elementary teachers and the high school teachers was due, in part, to the fact that more training was required of the high school teachers than of the elementary teachers, also, in the past high school teaching was considered as being more difficult and more important than elementary teaching. The requirement that high school teachers in State high schools have State certificates came ten years earlier

¹¹State School Facts, Volume VII, Number 5, 1931.

¹²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1928-1930, p. 229.

than the time when State certificates were required for elementary teachers.¹³

The drastic cuts made in the salaries of superintendents, principals, and teachers in 1931 by the General Assembly were brought about by the depression which came in 1929. The salaries were reduced, the teaching load was increased, and the salary increment accruing on the basis of experience was eliminated.¹⁴ The General Assembly inserted the provision that no teacher could receive a salary cut of more than ten per cent.

In 1933 the Legislature found it necessary to reduce the costs of operating the schools and again the teachers' salaries as well as those of the county superintendents and principals were reduced and for another two years, the salary increment for additional experience was also eliminated.¹⁵

The next Legislature in 1935, however, was able to provide more funds for salaries, due to improved economic conditions. With the increased funds teachers' salaries were increased more than twenty per cent over that paid in 1934-1935, and again in 1937 the Legislature gave the teachers another ten per cent boost in salary, but this did not restore salaries

¹³State School Facts, Volume I, Number 6, 1924.

¹⁴Ibid., Volume XII, Number 7, 1931.

¹⁵Ibid., Volume XIII, Number 8, 1933.

to the pre-depression level of 1929.¹⁶

The year 1940 offered little in the way of financial remuneration for school teachers, paraphrasing the words of Walter Hines Page, it may be said that she was the "Forgotten woman." This need not be said of the men for they were almost non-existent in the public schools at that time. There were approximately a thousand men teachers in the public schools other than principals and vocational agriculture teachers, and by 1943 this number had been reduced to a few hundred.¹⁷ They refused to remain in a profession offering less than a decent living wage. The salaries at that time were still lower than those twenty years earlier while salaries of other professions requiring less training were much higher. The maximum salary for a teacher in this State, paid from State funds in 1941 was \$128 per month while in 1921 the maximum was \$133 per month.¹⁸

Teachers were soon letting the public know that they were not a forgotten group any longer. Many of the better trained ones began an exodus into more lucrative fields, while those who remained in the profession were seeking better financial support for the schools.¹⁹ With the growing teacher shortage

¹⁶Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1936-1938, pp. 5-9.

¹⁷Ibid., 1942-1944, p. 96.

¹⁸Report of the State School Commission, 1939-1940, p. 12.

¹⁹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, p. 106.

the public soon realized something should be done.

One of the best ways of holding a high standard of teaching and improving a school system is to make it attractive by increasing the teacher's pay check. If the salary schedule is nearly in line with other professions of like training the schools will attract and hold the better trained people, while on the other hand, if the salaries are too low, as the case has been in the past in this State, few of the better trained college graduates will enter the profession. Educators and the farsighted business men of the State realize this fact and have been fighting for larger appropriations for a higher salary schedule for the teachers in the public schools of the State. For the past ten years the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in his recommendations to the General Assembly has placed the raising of teachers' salaries first. In 1937 he said:

I believe this question of restoring teachers salaries should be the first concern of the present law-making body. . . . In building of character and citizenship North Carolina should have the best, but the best will not be obtainable as long as we continue to pay relatively low salaries.²⁰

The recommendations of the Superintendent were unheeded as were those of thousands of other people in the State until the shortage of teachers became so acute that many schools went without a full staff, to say nothing of the teachers with

²⁰Ibid., 1936-1938.

inferior training that had to be employed.

The General Assembly of 1943 provided for a war bonus, from State funds, of from ten to twenty-four dollars per month for all teachers in the public schools, the amount of bonus each teacher received depended upon the annual salary of each teacher.²¹ An annual salary increase, however, was made available to many teachers, due to the extension of the school term from eight to nine months and the increase in funds to support it.

The greatest single increase in teachers' salaries in the history of the State, was provided for by the General Assembly of 1947. This increase came about only after the general public, together with many educational and civic organizations, exerted a great deal of pressure on the law-making body. An increase of approximately thirty per cent was granted the teachers. This increase will give a maximum salary of \$268 per month, for nine months, to teachers with the highest grade of certificate and the largest number of years experience.²²

Tables V to X, inclusive, give a comparison of, and the major changes in teachers' salaries since 1921 when the State adopted its first salary schedule for public school teachers.

²¹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1943, Chapter 531, Section 1.

²²State Salary Schedule, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1947-1948.

TABLE V
MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1921-1922^(a)

Experience in Years	Type of Certificate										
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Provisional C	Elementary A	Elementary B	Provis. Elem.	Temporary	Provisional A	Provisional B	County 2nd Grade
0	\$100	\$90	\$85	\$75	\$75	\$65	\$55	\$60	\$55	\$50	\$45
1	105	95	90	80	80	70	60				
2	110	100	95	85	85	75	65				
3	120	105	100	90	90	80	70				
4	133	110	105	95	95	85	75				

(a) Educational Bulletin XXX, "Administration of the Public School System, 1919-1920." p. 6.

TABLE VI
MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1933-1934^(a)

Experience in Years	Type of Certificate					
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Elemen- tary A	Elemen- tary B	Non Standard
0	\$70	\$60	\$55	\$50	\$45	\$45
1	73	63	58	53		
2	75	65	60	55		
3	78	68	63			
4	80	70	65			
5	83	73				
6	88					
7	90					

(a) Report of the State School Commission, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1933-1935, p. 11.

TABLE VII
MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1935-1936^(a)

Experience in Years	Type of Certificate					
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Elemen- tary A	Elemen- tary B	Non Standard
0	\$84	\$72	\$66	\$60	\$54	\$54
1	87	75	69	63		
2	90	78	72	66		
3	93	81	75			
4	96	84	78			
5	99	87				
6	102	90				
7	105					
8	108					

(a) Report of the State School Commission, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1935-1937, p. 9.

TABLE VIII

MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1940-1941^(a)

Experience in Years	Type of Certificate					
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Elemen- tary A	Elemen- tary B	Non Standard
0	\$96	\$82	\$76	\$68	\$60	\$56
1	100	86	79	72		
2	103	89	83	76		
3	106	93	86			
4	110	96	89			
5	114	100				
6	118	103				
7	122					
8	128					

(a) Report of the State School Commission, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1938-1940, p. 13.

TABLE IX
MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1946-1947^(a)

Experi- ence in Years	Grad- uate	Type of Certificate					
		Class A	Class B	Class C	Elemen- tary A	Elemen- tary B	Non Standard
0		\$125	\$110	\$100	\$90	\$80	\$75
1		128	114	103	93	84	
2	\$143	131	117	107	97	88	
3	147	135	121	110	100	92	
4	152	139	124	113	103		
5	157	143	128	116			
6	162	147	132				
7	167	152					
8	172	157					
9	177	162					
10	182	167					
11	187						

(a) A bonus of \$13.33 extra was added monthly to all teachers' salaries.

TABLE X
MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS, 1947-1948^(a)

Experi- ence in Years	Type of Certificate						
	Grad- uate	Class A	Class B	Class C	Elemen- tary A	Elemen- tary B	Non Standard
0		\$180	\$160	\$137	\$127	\$117	\$100
1		184	165	141	131	121	
2	\$203	188	169	145	134	125	
3	209	193	174	149	137	129	
4	215	198	179	153	140		
5	221	203	184	157			
6	227	209	189				
7	233	215					
8	240	221					
9	247	227					
10	254	234					
11	261	241					
12	268						

(a) State Board of Education, Raleigh, North Carolina,
July 1947.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOURCES OF SCHOOL REVENUE

The oldest form of financial support of the public schools now employed in North Carolina is the permanent school fund, known as the Literary Fund. This fund was created by a legislative enactment in 1825, to provide support for the public schools of the State. However, most of the principal was lost during the Civil War and the period of reconstruction. In 1903 it was converted into a permanent loan fund to be loaned to the counties of the State for the building of schoolhouses. The amount of the principal at that time was nearly \$200,000.¹

The State sources of this fund as set forth by the Constitution of 1876 and still in existence today are:

1 The proceeds of all lands that have been or hereafter may be granted by the United States to this State and not otherwise appropriated by this

¹Edgar W. Knight, Public School Education in North Carolina, Durham, Trinity College Press, 1916, p. 107.

State or the United States.

2 All money, stocks, bonds, and other property belonging to any State fund for purposes of education.

3 The net proceeds of all sales of swamp lands belonging to the State; and all other grants, gifts, or devises that have been or hereafter may be made to the State and not otherwise appropriated by the State or by the terms of the grant, gift or devise.²

Another source of this fund made available by the General Assembly was that from the sale of bonds. An act passed in 1917 provided for the sale of as much as \$500,000 worth of bonds to increase this fund, and \$333,000 worth were sold and added to this fund.³ Eventually these bonds were repaid, but the fund realized the permanent increase because the State charged the counties a slightly higher rate of interest than the State itself had to pay. Also the State collected the interest in advance and thus increased the amount it could re-lend to other counties, profits derived in this way were added to the permanent fund. The principal of the original Literary Fund had increased to a total of \$2,198,694 in 1944.⁴ Prior to the outbreak of World War II the demand for loans became so great that restrictions by the State Board of Education had to

²Constitution of North Carolina, Article IX, Section 4.

³Fletcher H. Swift and Bruce L. Zimmerman, State School Taxes and School Funds and Their Apportionment, Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin Number 29, 1928.

⁴Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, p. 210.

...to any State fund for purposes of education...

...of all sales of swamp lands...

...to the State; and all other grants, gifts,...

...that have been or hereafter may be made...

...and not otherwise by any State...

...of the terms of the grant, gift or devise.

...source of this fund made available by the General...

...was that from the sale of bonds. An act passed in...

...for the sale of as much as \$200,000 worth of...

...to increase this fund, and \$200,000 worth were sold and...

...this fund. Eventually these bonds were repaid, but...

...the present interest because the State...

...considers a slightly higher rate of interest than...

...the State itself has to pay. Also the State collected the...

...in advance and thus increased the amount it could re-

...to other countries, profits derived in this way were added...

...the present fund. The principal of the original liability...

...was increased to a total of \$2,196,604 in 1920. When...

...of World War II the demand for loans became so...

...by the State Board of Education had to...

...of North Carolina, Article IX, Section 4.

...and James L. B. ...

...Department of ...

...29, 1928.

...of Public ...

be made as to the total amount a county could borrow from it at one time. The sum was set at \$25,000 which would mean very little to a county school building program.

The largest source of school revenue from 1900 until the State made provision for State support of the minimum school term was an ad valorem or general property tax on both real and personal property. The county and special chartered districts had to employ this method of financing the school program, as it was the only source which could be relied upon to furnish sufficient revenue to carry on a minimum school program. This was a sure tax, but judged according to the criteria of a good tax, it was one of the poorest. Little wonder then that the growth of the public school system was delayed in this State and that it developed into such unequal proportions when its support comes from taxable property, the assessed value of which varies enormously from county to county. The State Legislature, in trying to protect the tax-payer, set a tax limit beyond which the local units could not go, except with the approval of the people in an election for that purpose.⁵ This limitation proved a handicap to the schools in those districts with little taxable property.

Even though the ad valorem tax is considered one of the poorest taxes employed, it kept the public schools going in North Carolina until the State accepted the responsibility of

⁵Public Laws of North Carolina, 1899, Chapter 732.

supporting them for a minimum term. The amount of revenue this tax produced for school purposes rose from \$1,295,222 in 1902 to \$28,419,495 in 1925.⁶

The legislative enactment of 1933 greatly reduced the amount of school revenue this source produced when it provided:

It shall be unlawful for ad valorem taxes to be levied for the operation of the public school term except as hereinafter provided: the object of expenditures designated as maintenance of Plant and Fixed Charges shall be supplied from funds required by law to be placed to the credit of the public school fund of the county and derived from fines, forfeitures, penalties, dog taxes and poll taxes, and from all other sources except State funds, provided: that when necessity shall be shown, the State School Commission may approve the use of such funds in any administrative unit to supplement any object or item of the current expense budget; and in such cases, the levying authorities of the county administrative unit shall make a sufficient tax levy to provide the necessary funds for maintenance of Plant, Fixed Charges and Capital Outlay: provided, further, that the tax levying authorities in any county administrative unit with the approval of the State School Commission, may levy taxes to provide necessary funds for teaching vocational agriculture and home economics and trades and industrial vocational subjects supported in part from Federal Vocational Education funds.⁷

The same legislation allowed an ad valorem levy for local supplement to the State school program under certain prescribed conditions which were:

⁶Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1925, p. 22.

⁷State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Publication Number 85, pp. 9-10.

1 It was to have the approval of the State School Commission.

2 An election had to be held to determine whether there was to be a tax levy or not.

3 The local supplement could not provide a term for a longer period than 180 days.

4 The tax rate voted was the maximum until revoked by another election.⁸

Since the State made provisions for supporting the minimum school term, the general property taxes have provided about one-fifth of all available funds for public school purposes each year. More than \$12,430,364 was collected from an ad valorem levy in 1942-1943 or more than twenty-three per cent of all funds available that year for public school education.⁹

The Constitutional provision adopted in 1876 provided other sources of school revenue for the county units, but these have never amounted to very much as far as the total revenue requirements are concerned, they are:

1 All moneys, stocks, bonds, and other property belonging to a county school fund.

2 The net proceeds from the sale of estrays.

3 The clear proceeds of all penalties and forfeitures, and all fines collected in the several counties for any breach of the penal or military laws of the State.

4 All moneys which shall be paid by persons as an equivalent for exemption from military duty.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 11.

⁹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1943.

¹⁰Constitution of North Carolina, Article IX, Section V.

The capitation or poll tax, an antiquated form of taxation, stipulated in the Constitution for educational purposes and the support of the poor was a very good revenue producer in the early part of the century.¹¹ It accounted for about one-fifth of the total revenue available for school purposes in 1904.¹² A study of this source shows that it has been more or less static and could be relied upon to produce only a small fraction of revenue required for the support of the public schools. It is one of those taxes that can be evaded and for that reason it has failed to produce the amount of revenue that it should.

The relative importance of each of these sources of revenue for the support of the public schools of the State may be seen by the amount of revenue each produced as compared to the total amount available. Table XI gives the revenue receipts of each of the sources for the years indicated.

INCOME TAXES

Until 1920 the Constitution of North Carolina virtually prohibited the General Assembly from tapping one of the greatest sources of revenue of the State. Article V, Section 3,

¹¹Ibid., Article V, Sections 1-2.

¹²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1902-1904.

TABLE XI
SOURCES OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT SCHOOL FUNDS FOR
SELECTED YEARS^(a)

Sources	Year			
	1904	1918	1930	1938
Poll Taxes	\$356,323	\$	\$ 307,310	\$ 329,363
Ad Valorem Taxes, County	700,849	3,267,900 ^c	12,871,819	1,283,962
Ad Valorem Taxes, District	34,146	2,404,942	5,025,407	1,187,962
Forfeitures & Penalties	58,832	233,242	549,948	714,408
Liquor Licenses	87,443	d		
Other Taxes	12,044	12,000	76,578	106,899
Loan Fund	83,706	1,007,469	5,397,139	
Other Revenue Receipts	41,980	188,402	354,507	119,282
Total Funds Available ^(b)	1,777,624	8,789,931	32,804,507	26,214,894

(a) Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, for the years indicated.

(b) The total available school funds include all revenue from all sources and not just from the local units of government.

(c) The figures here include poll taxes, as well as the ad valorem or general property taxes for 1918, separate figures for poll taxes were unavailable.

(d) The adoption of State prohibition of liquor sales in 1908 eliminated this source of revenue.

provided:

The General Assembly may also tax trades, professions, franchises, and incomes: provided, that no income shall be taxed when the property from which the income is derived is taxed.

The Legislature of 1919 recognized the importance of this source of revenue and made provisions for a Constitutional Amendment wherein this source could be taxed up to six per cent of the income after allowing certain exemptions. The amendment was ratified by the people in the fall election of 1920.¹³ The Constitution was again amended in 1935 which allowed incomes to be taxed up to ten per cent of the income.¹⁴ The amount of revenue raised from income taxes from 1901 to 1918 shows how unimportant this source was up until the Constitution was amended so as to allow it to be taxed. The year after the amendment was ratified giving the Legislature the right to tax incomes regardless of what the incomes were derived from, this tax produced \$2,645,117. Table XII gives the amount raised for each year indicated.

Although the revenue from income tax was not earmarked for specific purposes, it was a part of the general fund from which the schools received their support. After this new

¹³Public Laws of North Carolina, 1920, Chapter 129, Section 1.

¹⁴Ibid., 1935, Chapter 248, Section 6.

TABLE XII
REVENUE FROM INCOME TAXES FOR
SELECTED YEARS^(a)

Year	Amount of Revenue
1901	\$ 4,850
1902	18,352
1907	29,487
1908	35,802
1913	42,657
1914	50,797
1917	64,152
1918	109,285

(a) Biennial Report of Treasurer of North Carolina,
years indicated.

source was opened up the State was able to discontinue the ad valorem tax as a support for public schools until 1931 when it was forced once again to levy a general property tax for a period of two years.

From 1922 to 1930 income tax revenue rose from \$2,645,117 to \$7,290,909 or more than a 300 per cent increase.¹⁵ It, along with all other revenues declined during the depression period, but still in 1934 when it fell to its lowest point, it produced \$6,055,240. From that year on there was a steady increase in the amount of revenue this source produced until 1940, and since that time the increase has been unprecedented. The latest figures available are those for the year ending June 30, 1946 and for that year which was an all time high record \$38,797,864 was collected by the State.¹⁶

SALES TAX

One of the hottest legislative battles ever to occur in North Carolina, was that which took place over the adoption of a light mercantile sales tax in 1931 and again over the adoption in 1933 by a general retail sales tax and a tax on wholesalers. This same tax measure became an issue in one of the closest

¹⁵Biennial Reports of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1922-1930.

¹⁶Ibid., 1934-1946.

political campaigns for governor that was ever staged in this State.

The Legislature of 1931 in trying to meet the financial needs of the State for the next biennium levied a tenth of one per cent sales tax on all merchants. Corporation taxes on utilities were increased; franchise taxes raised; and an ad valorem tax of fifteen cents on the property valuation of \$100 was again imposed. This measure, with the new taxes and the increases, failed to produce sufficient funds to meet the obligations of the State for general governmental purposes and for the support of the public schools for the six-months minimum term.

Other interesting features of the Legislation in 1931 were:

1 Reduction of the general property tax by the McLean Law, without provisions for financing the public schools.

2 Provision that the appropriations for the six-months school term could not be diminished for the next two years.

3 Authority granted upon the State Treasurer to borrow money to meet the obligations of the schools.¹⁷

The sales tax law of that year was passed as a temporary measure. Governor Gardner and members of the legislature were against such a tax as a permanent source of revenue. One of the pledges of the Democratic party in its platform was against

¹⁷North Carolina Public Laws, 1931, Chapter 10, Section 1.

a sales tax, and before the next session of the legislature many of the members had pledged themselves against such a tax.

In 1933 farm property had little earning power; homes were being sold for taxes, and others were left vacant. The legislators seeing these conditions began making plans to relieve the farmers, and by the time the 1933 session met it was a foregone conclusion that the general property tax would be abolished. There was also pressure to increase the State's support of the six-months minimum term to eight months.

With a large deficit in the State budget, the revenue problem had grown so acute by 1933 as to suggest higher tax rates and a greater amount of new taxation. The General Revenue Bill was introduced in the House January 16 carrying a retail sales tax and a tax on wholesale merchants. A few of its provisions were:

If any person after the 30th day of June 1933, shall engage or continue in any business for which a privilege tax is imposed by this Article, such person shall apply for and obtain from the Commissioner, upon the payment of the sum of one dollar (\$1.00), a license to engage in and to conduct such business for the current tax year, upon condition that such person shall pay the tax accruing to the State of North Carolina under the provisions of this Article. . . . Additional tax shall be as follows:

Wholesale merchants, upon every wholesale merchant as defined in this Article a tax of one twenty-fifth of one per cent ($1/25$) of gross sales of every such person, and the minimum tax for each six-months' period shall be twelve dollars and fifty cents (\$12.50).

Retail merchants, upon every retail merchant as defined in this Article, a tax of three per cent (3%) of the total gross sales by every such person.

. . . It is the purpose and intent of this Act

that the tax levied hereunder shall be passed on to the consumer instead of being absorbed by the merchant.¹⁸

For four months this measure was debated. The Merchants' Association of North Carolina, with more than fifty affiliated associations over the State, offered the greatest opposition to the bill, while the farmers and the school forces were leading the fight for its passage.¹⁹ The farmers, needing relief from taxes, wanted some other than a property tax and this one did not purport to throw all the burden on them. There was a feeling on the part of some that the schools would be more adequately financed by this new source of revenue, so the school forces were actively fighting for the bill.

Time and again the bill was completely rewritten and finally, after Governor Ehringhaus threw his support behind it, the measure passed by a bare margin of one vote.²⁰ Thus with the passage of this bill the State was able not only to operate the schools for the six-months term, but it added two more months, and an entirely new source of revenue had been opened up. This new tax, although it has been criticized by some, has proven a great blessing to the public schools and

¹⁸North Carolina Public School Laws, 1933, Chapter 445, Section 406.

¹⁹Robert Haig and Carl Shoup, The Sales Tax in the American States, pp. 188-198.

²⁰Ibid.

other departments of the State. During the first year of its operation it added \$6,014,937 to the general fund, out of which the public schools' funds are appropriated.²¹ There are only two other taxes in this State yielding more revenue, they are the Income taxes and gasoline taxes, and the yield of the latter is specifically earmarked for the State highways.

Table XIII shows the growth and importance of the sales tax as a source of revenue as compared with other sources of revenue in the general fund.

MINOR TAXES

Beside the major taxes that supply a large portion of the general funds of the State, there is another group that deserves attention here. The franchise tax, license tax, inheritance tax, intangible tax, insurance tax, and the beverage tax have become important revenue producers in the last fifteen years as is shown in Table XII.

Franchise tax, the franchise tax has produced more revenue for the past few years than the other taxes of this group. Like many other sources of revenue its yield has been growing. In 1910 it produced \$48,565, but from then until 1920 there was not such a great increase as might be expected. The increase during this period was less than \$100,000 but with the coming

²¹Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1933-1934.

TABLE XIII

GENERAL FUND TAX REVENUES (a)

Tax Source (b)	Receipts for Fiscal Years				
	1934	1936	1938	1940	1942
Inheritance	\$ 424,072	\$ 540,069	\$ 2,114,502	\$ 966,684	\$ 823,364
License	2,409,415	2,345,495	2,563,374	2,995,788	3,188,945
Franchise	6,484,508	7,260,124	7,940,812	8,103,744	9,379,860
Income	6,055,240	8,126,402	11,364,598	12,007,105	22,637,737
Sales	6,014,937	10,184,331	11,143,987	12,206,193	15,675,733
Beverage	340,470	624,608	1,537,331	2,264,909	3,746,486
Intangibles	(c)		906,487	1,532,892	1,646,768
Insurance	12,850	13,297	14,875	13,932	14,447
Total Revenue	23,450,783	29,318,946	37,775,504	41,718,921	59,249,655
				77,312,568	93,483,478

(a) Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1934-1946.

(b) Those taxes yielding less than one million dollars in 1946 are not shown in this table.

(c) Intangible taxes not yet levied.

(d) Franchise taxes on insurance companies were placed under the Insurance Commissioner, hence the shift in total revenue from this item to the item on Insurance.

of the good roads of the State the revenue of this source rose to more than four million dollars in 1930. Since that time there has been an increase in the amount of money it furnished the general funds. The peak of this rise came in 1945 when it yielded \$10,840,356.²²

License tax, one of the earliest forms of tax levied in the State was a license tax. It began in Colonial times and was levied by both State and local units of government. Since its origin it has gradually been developed to an important source of revenue.

The State imposes a tax or requires a license for a personal privilege, such as the practicing of a profession or the operation of a business. In 1941 the State Department of Revenue was issuing annually, about 125,000 licenses which netted the Treasury Department from five to ten dollars per license.²³ While the total amount of revenue received from this source that year amounted to \$3,112,444.²⁴ With the expansion of the economic system this source of revenue has a promising future.

Inheritance tax, the inheritance tax laws have been so amended that such taxes have for years made an important contribution to the public revenue of the State. In 1911 this

²²Ibid., 1910-1946.

²³Report of the Department of Tax Research, 1942, pp. 13-16.

²⁴Biennial Reports of Treasurer of North Carolina, 1910-1946.

law was so weak and had so many loopholes in it that this tax yielded only \$9,822, but for the decade from 1932-1942 this tax had an average annual yield of more than \$1,200,000 and in 1946 this was increased to \$1,719,316.²⁵

Intangible property tax, another tax of importance is the intangible personal property tax. This was set aside as a State source of revenue by the General Assembly of 1937 to be used for the maintenance of the public schools. Article VIII, Section 700 of this act provides:

Taxes levied in this Article for the maintenance of the public schools of the State, under authority of section six, Article V, of the Constitution.

Intangible personal properties defined and classified by this chapter, with the exceptions hereinafter, made, are hereby segregated for exclusive State taxation after the year one thousand nine hundred thirty-seven and at the same time stated in this Article and shall be taxed as hereinafter provided.²⁶

This is a tax on such personal property as patents, copyrights, trade-marks, franchises, stocks, bonds, cash, bank deposits, notes, bills, and accounts receivable, and other like property.

Prior to this act this source of revenue was relatively unimportant, since there was no definite way of determining the amount of such property under local taxation and it could easily

²⁵Report of the Department of Tax Research, 1942, p. 11.

²⁶Revenue Act, General Assembly of North Carolina, 1937, Article VII, Section 700.

and the amount and had to many thousands in 1937. This tax
was not levied in 1937, but the amount from 1937-1938 was
the same as in 1937. The yield of more than \$1,200,000 and in
1937 was increased to \$1,219,216.
In 1937, another tax of insurance in the
insurance company property tax. This was set aside as a
source of revenue by the General Assembly of 1937 to be
used for the maintenance of the public schools. Article VIII,
Section 1 of this act provides:

Section 1. The General Assembly of the State of North Carolina
do hereby enact that the public schools of the State, under authority
of Article VII, of the Constitution,
shall be maintained and operated by the State, and the amount of the
tax levied by this chapter, with the exception of the amount
levied by this chapter for the maintenance of the public schools,
shall be paid to the State for the maintenance of the public schools.
The year one thousand nine hundred thirty-
seven and the same time stated in this Article and
shall be paid to the State for the maintenance of the public schools.

This is a tax on each person's property as defined, copy-
right, trademarks, stocks, bonds, and other like
property, and accounts receivable, and other like

as to this act this source of revenue was relatively
small, since there was no definite way of determining the
amount of the property under local taxation and it could easily

be evaded. Under present conditions this tax has become an important source of revenue. In 1946 its yield was nearly \$3,000,000.²⁷

Beverage tax, the beverage tax has again been opened up as a good source of revenue since the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States has been repealed. The selling of beer is again allowed in this State and the General Assembly has provided for the opening of liquor stores in certain counties when desired by the majority of the people. The amount of revenue this tax produced rose from \$1,886,888 in 1939 to \$6,904,728 in 1946.²⁸ This source has possibilities of yielding a much larger sum than it is now producing, due to the increasing number of counties voting for the establishment of liquor stores, and the increasing consumption of alcoholic beverages.

One of the minor sources of school revenue that has had an interesting history is that of the liquor tax. In 1904 the license and dispensaries taxes amounted to about five per cent of the total revenue available for educational purposes.²⁹ This source of revenue was done away with in 1908 when state-wide prohibition was adopted. It was in 1933 that this again

²⁷Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1945-1946, p. 58.

²⁸Ibid., 1939-1946.

²⁹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1933-1934.

became a source of revenue, probably with much better revenue producing capacity than ever before.³⁰ Its yield in 1946 amounted to more than \$6,900,000.³¹

The total revenue received from such minor sources as fines, forfeitures, penalties and other taxes, in 1938 was comparatively small, a little more than a million dollars was collected from these sources as compared to the local revenues of \$26,214,894 available for school purposes.³²

Insurance tax, the last tax of the above group and one *which may develop an increased source of revenue* in this State is an insurance tax *provisions for which were amended* ^{by the} Legislature of 1945 which provided:

Each and every insurance company shall, as a condition precedent for doing business in this State, between March sixteenth and the first day of April in 1945 and on or before April first of each year thereafter apply for and obtain from the Commissioner of Insurance a Certificate of Registration, or license, and shall pay for such certificate the following annual fees except as hereinafter provided:

. . . For each farmer's mutual assessment fire insurance company or association operating in not more than five counties.....	\$10.00
For each fraternal order.....	\$25.00
For each of all other insurance companies except mutual burial associations taxed under Section 208.....	\$300.00.

³⁰Revenue Act, 1933, Senate Bill 367.

³¹Biennial Report of State Treasurer, 1944-1946.

³²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1936-1938.

. . . Each and every insurance company shall annually pay to the Commission of Insurance a tax measured by gross premiums. . . . On the basis of the gross amount of premiums . . . each company or self-insurer shall pay as to:

The amounts collected on contracts applicable to liabilities under the Workman's Compensation Act, or the equivalent thereof in the case of self-insurers, a tax of four per cent (4%).

The amounts collected on annuities and all other contracts of insurance a tax of two per cent (2%).³³

This source of revenue produced \$ 730,336 in 1946, the first year in operation.³⁴ With the increasing insurance business it should become a valuable source of revenue.

³³Public Laws of North Carolina, 1945, Chapter 158, Sections 8, 70-72.

³⁴Biennial Report of the Treasurer of North Carolina, 1945-1946, p. 58.

CHAPTER VIII

RECENT SCHOOL LEGISLATION AND CHANGES

With the adoption of a uniform school term of nine months by the Legislature of 1943¹ and with the addition of a twelfth grade or twelfth year to the school program during the school term of 1946-1947 North Carolina's schools are on a par, in these respects with the schools in a majority of the other States of the Nation.

In no other equal period in the history of the State has there been so much progress in education as has taken place since 1932. Three months have been added to the length of the minimum school term. Another grade has been added, and the compulsory school attendance law amended, extending the upper age limit from fourteen to sixteen years of age. These changes greatly affect the educational opportunities of the children of the public schools of the State. The addition of three

¹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1943, Chapter 158, Section 1.

months to the school term has added a total of thirty-six more months within which a child has to complete high school than had the child of 1932, who was provided a minimum term of only six months. This situation, of course, existed for a relatively small number of children in poor areas.

The educational opportunities of any State are largely determined by the amount of funds available for school purposes. This has been particularly true in North Carolina. As the appropriations have increased in the past there have been noticeable improvements in the public school system. The increase in the amount of money, for school purposes from \$16,000,000 as was provided for by the Legislature of 1933 to \$37,712,874 in 1943, brought many desirable changes in public education in the State.² Free text books were provided all children through grammar school; the differentials existing between the salaries of the white and Negro teachers, paid from State funds were eliminated; improved qualifications of teachers, and many other favorable changes were made possible by the larger appropriations.

The recent increases in the appropriations provided for by the Legislature of 1947 reached an all time high in the amount of financial support for the public schools. This Legislature appropriated \$58,995,724 for the school year 1947-1948 and for the school year 1948-1949 it was \$60,412,959 for the

²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932-1934, 1942-1944.

operation of the nine-months school term.³

The growing shortage of qualified teachers became so acute during the school year of 1946-1947 that the public became alarmed at the plight of the schools and demanded that the General Assembly of 1947 make provisions for an increase in teachers' salaries.⁴ Dr. Clyde Erwin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in an address delivered to the Joint Appropriations Committee on January 5, 1947, depicted the seriousness of the conditions the schools were in, due to the teacher shortage, and he urged this committee to appropriate for schools all the money that could be found. He said:

. . . . Appropriate for schools every dollar you can find.

This is not a question of percentages. We have got to pay what it takes to get good teachers for North Carolina, and we won't overcome this present teacher shortage until this is done.⁵

Newspaper editors, civic and professional organizations, together with the general public and educational leaders of the State rose up in support of a higher salary schedule for teachers. Comments from a few newspapers are:

³North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 9, pp. 3, 15.

⁴Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944.

⁵North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 6, p. 1.

Citizen-Times of Asheville, September 15, 1946. The editor of this paper said:

. . . the salaries which the public school teachers of North Carolina are now receiving are grievously inadequate.

The 1947 General Assembly must find a swift and practical solution of this truly critical problem. It must authorize substantial salary increases for the State's teachers. It has no other sensible alternative.⁶

The Raleigh News and Observer editor, speaking in the same vein said:

And, while nothing can be done along this line until the next General Assembly, every prospective legislator should decide now that if he goes down to Raleigh to represent the people, the matter of securing adequate pay for school teachers should be placed high on the agenda of 'must' legislation.⁷

At the first meeting of the General Assembly in January 1947, a bill was introduced and later passed, providing for a temporary emergency bonus, ranging from \$144 to \$216 for all teachers who were on the pay roll between December 1, 1946 and January 30, 1947. One-half of this bonus was to be paid in the February voucher and the remainder paid in monthly installments

⁶Citizen-Times, Asheville, North Carolina, September 15, 1946.

⁷News and Observer, Raleigh, North Carolina, September 9, 1946.

as they became due until the end of the school year.⁸

The Charlotte Observer came out in support of a plan for paying teachers which became known as the South Piedmont plan. This plan proposed a new and complete teachers' salary schedule which would give a beginning teacher, holding a Class A teacher's certificate an annual salary of \$1,560. This plan also suggested increases each year for thirteen years when the maximum salary for a Class A certificate would be \$3,000 a year.⁹

The United Forces of Education had earlier in the year proposed at least a twenty per cent increase with a notice that a higher raise would be asked if the cost of living continued to rise.¹⁰ This group later asked for a thirty per cent increase.

After many long sessions and heated debates the General Assembly finally voted an appropriation which will give an increase of almost thirty per cent in salary for teachers (see Table X). This increase will give the teachers the highest salary schedule ever adopted in North Carolina, but it will still be below the salaries paid in a majority of the other

⁸North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 6, February 1947, p. 6.

⁹Charlotte Observer, October 12, 1946.

¹⁰The United Forces for Education were composed of representatives from the North Carolina Education Association, North Carolina Federation of Womens' Club, North Carolina School Board Association, North Carolina Grange, and the North Carolina Congress of Parent-Teachers Association.

states of the Nation, according to a Nation wide survey of teachers' salary increases by Benjamin Fine, "New York Times," June 28, 1947.

CHANGES IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

One of the most far reaching changes that has taken place in the administration of the public school system in the State was brought about by the Legislature of 1943 when it abolished the State School Commission, the State Textbook Commission, the State Board for Vocational Education, and the State Board of Commercial Education and transferred their powers, functions, and duties to the State Board of Education created by the Constitutional Amendment adopted in 1942.¹¹

In order to understand the importance of this measure, it is necessary to know a little of the history of school administration in the State.

Article IX, Section 8 of the Constitution of North Carolina, in 1876 created a State Board of Education, with the stipulation that,

The Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Attorney-General, shall

¹¹Session Laws of North Carolina, 1943, Chapter 721, Section 1.

constitute a State Board of Education . . . but all acts rules and regulations of said Board may be altered, amended or repealed by the General Assembly. . . .¹²

Thus an ex-officio board was created, but the real authority for a system of education was left to the discretion of the legislature.

In 1901 the Legislature, using the authority invested in it by the Constitution, created a Textbook Commission, whose duty it was to select and adopt a uniform series or system of textbooks for use in the public schools of the State.¹³

Another board was created by the Legislature of 1917, known as the State Board for Vocational Education.¹⁴ This board was created to administer and allocate the funds to be distributed under the provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act, passed by Congress in 1917. Full and complete power and authority over this part of the educational program was delegated to this board, even to the extent of fixing the salaries and making provisions for the training of the teachers in this field.¹⁵

¹²Constitution of North Carolina, 1876, Article IX, Sections 8 and 10.

¹³Public Laws of North Carolina, 1901, Chapter 1, Section 1.

¹⁴Ibid., 1917, Chapter 95, Section 2.

¹⁵Ibid., 1919, Chapter 131, Section 445.

Again in 1919 the Legislature added another independent body to the increasing number of groups that administer the public school program, when it provided for the appointment of a high school textbook committee, consisting of five members. This committee was to be appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Its duty was to select a list of books to be placed on the State adopted list of books for use in the high schools.¹⁶

The confusion existing in the public school system due largely to the overlapping of authority and responsibilities of the independent boards and the changing policies of the State Legislature rendered administration ineffective and difficult.

One illustration--the high schools--will suffice to make clear the confusion and division of authority. Until 1919, the state board of education prescribed the rules and regulations for establishing and maintaining the so called State high schools. Now the board only apportions state funds to them. The state superintendent prescribes rules and regulations as to organization and course of study, and, along with a commission appointed by himself, selects the textbooks. The state board of vocational education has charge of vocational instruction, while another commission prescribes general courses for agriculture, manual training, and home economics. The state board of examiners certifies the teachers. And finally the high schools are inspected by an official appointed by the state superintendent.¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., Chapter 201, Section 4.

¹⁷Report of the State Educational Commission, 1920, p.

Such conditions caused the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to recommend that the State Educational Commission, which was created in 1917, make a survey of the educational conditions and to report same to the General Assembly. This commission was continued by the Legislature of 1919 and was instructed to report to the General Assembly in 1921 with its findings and recommendations.¹⁸

The findings and recommendations of this commission were submitted to Governor Bickett in 1920. Some of the recommendations follow:

1 Amend the Constitution so as to create a lay board.

2 Abolish all other boards and place in the State Board of Education the power to make rules and regulations governing the organization and management of the public schools; the certification of teachers; the construction of school buildings; and the management and direction of teacher training.

3 The State Department of Education be reorganized and enlarged so as to include the following divisions; schoolhouse planning, certification department, department of supervision, school extension work, budget and accounting department.

4 More appropriations for the State Department in order to obtain the best qualified personnel.

5 Increase teacher salaries.

6 Equalize the school terms in the State.

7 Increase appropriations for the schools.¹⁹

The Commission saw the need for a reorganization in the State administration of the public school system. This group also saw that the accomplishment of the schools depended largely

¹⁸Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 87.

upon the amount of money spent for education. Therefore, an urgent plea was made for more funds for educational purposes:

Education is not cheap. It is expensive and it is every day becoming more expensive. But let it not be forgotten that education is the most profitable investment that a state can make. . . . Our suggestions involve large expenditures; but the state can afford them. As our educational facilities develop our wealth will increase; we shall be able to spend more still in training the children of the state.²⁰

The Legislature meeting in extra session in 1920, provided a few of the things recommended. A division of Schoolhouse Planning was created, \$10,000 annually was appropriated to finance it, and it was placed under the direction of the office of the State Superintendent.²¹ Also \$5,000 was appropriated for better administration and supervision of the public school funds.²² A division of Teacher Certification in the office of the State Superintendent was created by the next Legislature in 1921, but the independent boards, each with its separate power and control remained in existence.

A State Board of Equalization, consisting of eleven members was established by the Legislature of 1927 to administer the equalization funds of the State.²³ This board was given more

²⁰Ibid., pp. 136, 137.

²¹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1920, Chapter 91, Section 6.

²²Ibid., Section 16.

²³Ibid., 1927, Chapter 256, Section 4.

responsibility by each succeeding Legislature until it virtually assumed general management of the public school system by 1933. At that time it was abolished by the Legislature but was replaced by a more responsible agency, the State School Commission:

All of the powers and duties heretofore conferred by law upon the State Board of Equalization together with such other powers and duties as may be conferred by this Act, shall be vested in the State School Commission.²⁴

In addition to the powers and duties heretofore exercised by the State Board of Equalization the new commission was empowered to:

- 1 Redistrict the counties for a more economical operation of the schools.
- 2 To allocate funds apportioned to support eight months school term;
- 3 To determine the teaching load and allocate teachers accordingly;
- 4 To control and manage the transportation of school children;
- 5 To approve local supplementary budgets;
- 6 Together with the State Board of Education to determine a salary schedule for teachers;
- 7 To make rules and regulations governing the costs of all items used in the operation of the schools.²⁵

Then in 1935 another commission was added by the Legisla-

²⁴Ibid., 1933, Chapter 562, Section 2.

²⁵Report of the North Carolina State School Commission, 1933, pp. 5-6.

ture, the State Textbook Purchase and Rental Commission.²⁶ Its primary duty was to make rules and regulatory measures to:

- 1 Purchase textbooks and institutional supplies which are or may be on the adopted list of the State standard course of study;
- 2 Provide a system of distribution of said textbooks;
- 3 Provide rental charges for use of textbooks and supplies;
- 4 Cause annual audit to be made of the affairs of said commission.

A State Textbook Commission superseded this commission in 1937.²⁷

Thus with a multiplicity of powers that these separate boards had over the program of education, each working in its particular field and often sharing the responsibility of a particular function with another board left the State public schools without a uniform system of planning and control.

The greater unification and coordination in the planning and administration of the public schools made possible through a single agency, directed the Legislature to create the State Board of Education and to transfer into its hands the functions previously performed by multiple boards. The law creating this new State Board of Education made provisions for a board of thirteen members, ten of whom were to be appointed by the governor for eight year staggered terms. Eight of the members

²⁶Public Laws of North Carolina, 1935, Chapter 422, Section 1.

²⁷Ibid., 1937, Chapter 169, Section 1.

were to be chosen from eight State educational districts to be formed by the General Assembly and two from the State at large.

AUXILIARY EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Public education today is more than giving a child the fundamental knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic. It consists of such training as will enable a person to take his place in society and enjoy it as well as be an asset to it. This kind of training would be very difficult were it not for such auxiliary agencies as libraries, lunch rooms, transportation, health services, social and physical education activities, visual education and others. These were introduced into the school program gradually and today they are a vital part of it. The State recognized the value of some of these agencies many years ago and made appropriations for these newer services; others like physical education, visual education, and lunch rooms are more recent innovations and have had the sanction of the Board of Education for only a few years.

Libraries. The State's first appropriation for libraries came in 1901 when the legislature appropriated \$5,000 to be expended by the State Board of Education for the establishment of libraries in the rural districts.²⁸ The State's appropriation for this service had grown to more than \$116,000 in 1946

²⁸Ibid., Chapter 512, Sections 6-12.

while the total amount from all sources spent on libraries that year exceeded \$190,000.²⁹

The libraries in the public schools of North Carolina have made vast improvement in the past ten years. Changes in the methods of teaching have increased the circulation of books related to classroom assignments. The increase in the appropriations make possible the purchase of a greater variety and number of books. The provisions for trained personnel have also been responsible for many changes that have occurred.

For a greater service to students, libraries are being given much care and consideration when new school buildings are being planned and erected. Library rooms are being made spacious and attractive, and equipped with such furniture as will make them inviting to the children.³⁰ An evaluation of the book collections in several hundred schools of the State show that the type of books selected give a better balanced collection in variety as well as in levels of reading difficulty.³¹

A study of Table XIV should give a fairly good picture of the present school library program in this State.

²⁹North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 1, 3.

³⁰Clyde A. Erwin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Publication Number 257.

³¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944, pp. 55-58.

TABLE XIV
COMPARATIVE LIBRARY STATISTICS FOR TWO
CONSECUTIVE YEARS^(a)

	1944-1945	1945-1946
Schools Reporting	2,355	2,365
Pupils enrolled	668,416	709,692
Books in libraries	3,065,903	3,272,890
Books per pupil	4.45	4.61
Magazines in libraries	27,233	29,466
Book circulation	9,838,935	9,996,218
Average circulation per pupil	14.29	14.08
Total expenditures	\$443,199	\$490,523
Expenditures per pupil	.64	.69
Expenditures for books & magazines	392,339	433,501
Expenditures per pupil for books & magazines	.57	.61
Schools with full-time librarians	121	122
Schools with part-time librarians	614	588
Schools with teacher-librarians	862	963

(a) North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. IX,
Number 4.

TABLE XIV

COMPARATIVE LIBRARY STATISTICS FOR THE CONSTITUENT STATES

1945-1946	1944-1945	
2,365	2,355	Books acquired
709,898	688	Books acquired
3,322,896	3,063,908	Books in libraries
4.61	4.68	Books per capita
39,466	37,333	Acquisitions in libraries
9,996,213	838,932	Books in circulation
14.06	14.28	Books in circulation per capita
840,523	825,222	Total number of books
69	64	Books in libraries per capita
1,201	392,339	Books in libraries per book
61	57	Books in libraries per capita
100	121	Books in libraries per capita
108		Books in libraries per capita
901	882	Books in libraries per capita

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Library Statistics, 1945*, p. 18.

Expenditures for library services are far too small. State appropriations supply about one-fourth of all funds used while the other is derived from local sources, county and city appropriations and from textbook rental fees.³² One of the greatest handicaps of the program is the insufficient amount of funds available with which to employ trained personnel. Only about one-third of the schools that have libraries also have trained library personnel.³³ This particular aspect of the program deserves and should have the immediate attention of the law-makers.

The school cafeteria. The lunchroom program is the outgrowth of efforts to provide food for undernourished and hungry children at a very low cost. Some schools in North Carolina had provided lunchroom facilities prior to 1930. The period from 1930 to 1947 might be characterized as the era in which the nutrition program of the schools was established.³⁴

Public interest is indicated by public support of the lunchroom projects throughout the State. This interest is shown in the form of local sponsorship by the schools' administration, the Congress of Parents and Teachers, community

³²North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. IX, No. 4, p. 57.

³³Ibid., p. 58.

³⁴North Carolina State Planning Board, Chapel Hill, N. C., January 11, 1945.

Specialists for library services are very few. The library supply about one-fourth of all books used. The other is derived from local sources, county and city. One of the most important and the best book rental has been established. The program is the largest and most extensive in the country with which to supply trained personnel. This is one of the schools that have libraries also. This particular aspect of the program has been given the immediate attention of the library.

The program is a very low cost. Some schools in North Carolina have had lunchroom facilities prior to 1930. The period from 1930 to 1937 might be characterized as the era in which the lunchroom program of the schools was established. The public interest is indicated by public support of the lunchroom projects throughout the State. This interest is shown in the form of local sponsorship by the schools, which is the basis of success and progress.

Public School Bulletin, Vol. 12, No. 4.

State Planning Board, Chapel Hill, N. C.

chests, and contributions of local civic minded individuals. The State has given support by permitting State allotted teachers to spend a portion of their time in the lunchroom.

Federal interest and support of the program has been indicated by: aid given through such agencies as the Works Progress Administration and National Youth Administration, both now extinct; aid given in the form of surplus commodities and agricultural products; and by direct grants of money to the states for lunchroom purposes under the Federal Permanent School Lunch Program.³⁵

The public has seen and appreciates the value of a lunch program in the schools and is demanding that wherever possible such facilities be made available. In most of the plans for new school plants, provisions are made for the establishment of lunchrooms. An increasing number of school buildings are being remodeled in order to make such provisions.

During the school year 1945-1946 the number of schools with lunchrooms was 1,015 and more than \$6,400,000 was spent on school lunches. The number of schools participating in this program had increased to more than 1,200.³⁶

Although the State has failed to make any provisions for

³⁵Information gained by the writer, having five years experience in organizing and supervising a school cafeteria, while principal of Pineville High School, Pineville, N. C.

³⁶North Carolina Public School Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 3, November 1946, p. 14.

financing a school lunch program, it is an integral part of our public school program today and should have the financial backing of the State in order to make it available to every child.

Transportation. Probably one of the greatest factors in the improvement of the rural public school system is the transportation of school children at public expense. This had its beginning during the school year 1912-1913 when there was a movement to provide better educational advantages for rural children.³⁷ Six horse drawn vehicles were used the following year to transport 247 pupils.³⁸ The county board of education was made the legal authority for effecting such transportation by the Legislature of 1911 when it provided:

Upon the consolidation of two or more districts into one by the county board of education, the said county board of education is authorized and empowered to make provisions for the transportation of pupils in said consolidated districts that reside too far from the schoolhouse to attend without transportation and pay for the same out of the apportionment to said consolidated district: provided, that the daily cost of transportation per pupil shall not exceed the daily cost per pupil of providing a separate school in a separate district for said pupil.³⁹

³⁷State School Facts, 1931, Vol. II, No. 6.

³⁸Ibid.,

³⁹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1911, Chapter 135, Section 1.

This cost was later made a part of the regular school budget.⁴⁰

This service has had a tremendous growth. In 1929-1930 North Carolina was transporting 172,862 pupils daily which was more than any other State. Indiana ranked next to North Carolina by transporting more than 145,000 pupils, but the cost of Indiana was double that of this State. The average cost per pupil transported that year in North Carolina was \$11.67 with a total cost of \$1,913,195.⁴¹

Great improvements have been made in the transportation facilities in the past few years. A maximum load, comfortable seats, and heat for all buses are the latest requirements prescribed by the General Assembly.⁴²

Not only has there been vast improvement in the services rendered, but school transportation has expanded tremendously. The latest figures available show that for the school year 1942-1943 there were 4,879 buses being used for the transportation of pupils. A total of 322,894 pupils were being transported daily at a total cost of \$2,366,408 per year.⁴³

With an improvement in the transportation facilities and

⁴⁰Ibid., Section 81.

⁴¹State School Facts, 1931, Vol. VII, Number 6.

⁴²North Carolina Public School Bulletin, May 1947, Vol. XI, Number 6.

⁴³Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944.

with an increase in the average number of pupils transported daily the annual average cost per pupil has decreased from \$14.93 in 1925-1926 to \$7.33 in 1942-1943.⁴⁴

Textbook Commission. The Legislature of 1935, in making provisions for rental of textbooks to the pupils in the public schools of North Carolina, entered a new field in which no State had ever had any experience. It was a huge undertaking to provide and distribute enough textbooks for more than 800,000 pupils, and to provide for the collection of rent on 1,500,000 books. This was a task for the Textbook Commission which was created in 1935.⁴⁵

From 1935 until the Legislature provided free textbooks in 1937 to all students from grade one through seven, a total of \$2,371,264 was expended for books and more than a million dollars had been collected in the rentals, damage fees and sale of books. More than nine million books had been made available to the pupils through this channel.⁴⁶ With the addition of the twelve year program, the eighth grade was set up as a part of the elementary school, therefore, free textbooks were provided the children of this grade in 1945.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Public Laws of North Carolina, 1935, Chapter 464.

⁴⁶Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1936-1938.

⁴⁷Public Laws of North Carolina, 1945, Chapter 644, Section 1.

High school students still pay a rental fee of \$2.40 each, per year for their books. The amount of fees collected during 1943-1944 was more than \$300,000 for high school books.⁴⁸

Library books and supplementary books were taken over by the Textbook Commission as a part of the rental system in 1939-1940, when complete authority for the provision of all books used by the schools was placed in the hands of the Textbook Commission. Tables XV and XVI give the number of books handled and expenditures for this service.

LOCAL SUPPLEMENTS TO STATE FINANCIAL PROGRAM

For many local units the State appropriations are insufficient to maintain an educational program that the citizenry demand. New subject matter, provisions for auxiliary agencies, higher salaries for teachers, and specially trained personnel for specific jobs are a few of the things for which the public is willing to pay extra.

The Legislature of 1933 prohibited a tax levy for supplementary purposes to the State supported school system without a vote of the people to determine whether or not such a levy should be made. A majority of the city units and many of the counties have voted to supplement the State school support.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944.

⁴⁹Public Laws of North Carolina, 1933, Chapter 455, Section 9.

TABLE XV

NUMBER OF BOOKS HANDLED BY TEXTBOOK DIVISION^(a)

Year	Basal Elemen- tary Books Free	High School Books	Supple- mentary Readers	Elemen- tary Library	High School Library	Total
1935-36	1,290,910	198,882				1,489,792
1937-38	3,946,165	763,860	456,090			5,166,105
1939-40	5,050,532	1,016,135	505,186	5,763		6,577,657
1941-42	4,818,061	1,212,217	650,242	80,244		6,760,764
1943-44	5,093,239	1,819,487	777,775	227,196	96,588	8,014,285

TABLE XVI

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES FOR BOOKS BY THE
TEXTBOOK DIVISION^(b)

Year	Elemen- tary Books	High School Books	Supple- mentary Readers	Elemen- tary Library	High School Library	Total
1935-36	\$423,474	\$232,636				\$656,110
1937-38	824,858	235,946	\$190,568			1,251,372
1939-40	193,324	225,131	19,115	\$ 4,180		431,750
1941-42	388,140	192,154	65,000	39,452		635,746
1943-44	190,057	193,718	76,261	62,119	\$107,091	629,246

(a) Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1944-1946, p. 86.

(b) Ibid.

Fifty-eight of the seventy city administrative units have voted to supplement the State school program since that time, and elections held in ten county units have favored a supplementary levy.⁵⁰

During the school year 1943-1944 local units spent \$4,641,853 local funds for instructional services and auxiliary agencies, beside the amount spent for many other services by local units and individual schools which was not reported to the State Board of Education.⁵¹

The privilege of supplementing the State appropriations to increase the standards and efficiency of the local school program tends to create an undesirable situation in that it develops unequal educational opportunities. The wealthier units, in this way, are able to get the better qualified teachers, to the disadvantage of the units with less available funds. On the other hand, as a unit advances in education it tends to stimulate a desire on the part of the people of other units for better schools for their children and in this way the entire State school program may be improved.

The teacher shortage and the recent demand of the public for improvement has been responsible for many local units voting for a supplement to the State program. Charlotte city

⁵⁰Data secured from Mr. West, Statistician, State Department of Public Instruction, August 6, 1947.

⁵¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1942-1944.

the county city administrative units have
 been in operation. The State school program since that time,
 and the county units have favored a similar
 program.

School year 1943-1944 local units spent

local funds for instructional services and auxiliary
 services. Besides the amount spent for any other services by
 local units and individual schools which was not reported to
 the State Department of Education.

The privilege of each uniting the State appropriations
 to increase the standards and efficiency of the local school
 system tends to create an unstable situation in that it

creates unequal educational opportunities. The realization
 that, in this way, are able to get the better qualified teach-
 ers, to the disadvantage of the units with less available

funds. On the other hand, as a unit advances its education it
 tends to stimulate a desire on the part of the people of other
 units for better schools for their children and in this way the
 State school program may be improved.

The teacher shortage and the record demand of the public

has been reported by the State Department of Education.

Report from Mr. West,
 Director, Department of Education,
 August, 1947.

of the State Department of Education

unit has probably gone farther in this field than any other. It voted a second local tax levy of twenty-five cents on the \$100 valuation in April of 1947 to supplement the State teacher salary schedule so that a teacher drawing the minimum would receive \$1,800 while one drawing the maximum would receive a salary of \$3,000 per year.⁵² Durham, Winston-Salem, Asheville and a few other districts are supplementing teachers' salaries by as much as twenty per cent above the State salary schedule. A much larger number of administrative units are giving a supplement of a flat sum of ten to fifteen dollars per month.

The Legislature of 1947 made provision for additional appropriations for school purposes, for local levies without an election when it provided:

Tax revenue authorities in any county administrative unit may levy taxes to provide funds for attendance enforcement, supervision of instruction, health and physical education, clerical assistance, and accident insurance for school children transported by bus.⁵³

⁵²Charlotte Observer, April 20, 1947.

⁵³North Carolina Education, May 1947, p. 455.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Education in North Carolina in the early part of the *twentieth* century still showed the effects of the War Between the States. The State school fund had diminished to such a degree that it did not produce enough revenue to influence the school program to any great extent. The schools were being financed locally by a general property tax which resulted in a great inequality of educational opportunities. However, there was an awakening to the educational needs on the part of the public at that time due to the leadership of Governor Aycock. The State Legislature began to show more concern for the schools by making direct appropriations out of State funds to equalize educational opportunities. High schools were also made available at public expense for all the children of the State.

Special tax districts were allowed to be formed in order to improve the conditions of the schools. The method of distribution of the equalization funds was changed and the amount

CHAPTER IX

SUBSIDIARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Education in North Carolina in the early part of the nineteenth century still showed the effects of the War Between the States. The State school fund had diminished to such an extent that it did not produce enough revenue to influence the schools to any great extent. The schools were being maintained by a general property tax which resulted in a great inequality of educational opportunities. However, there was an awakening to the educational needs on the part of the people at that time due to the leadership of Governor Johnston. The State Legislature began to show more concern for the schools by making direct appropriations out of State funds to maintain educational opportunities. High schools were also established at public expense for all the children of the State. The State was allowed to be formed in order to improve the conditions of the schools. The method of this was the qualification funds was changed and the amount

of the appropriation was increased from time to time. A new source of revenue was developed with the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution to allow incomes to be taxed. An Equalization Commission was created to handle and administer the State's equalization fund. The partial collapse of the economic system caused the Legislature to take over the support of the foundation program of the public schools and in doing so the minimum term was extended to eight months. The general property tax was also abolished for financing the school program and the State's appropriation for the school continued to grow by finding new sources of revenue.

The majority of the school buildings in 1900 were one- or two-room structures, more than a thousand of which were made of logs. The Legislature stimulated building activities when it changed the Literary Fund into a building loan fund. It later made possible the financing of a building program by permitting the counties to issue bonds for that purpose. Provisions were made for drawing up school building plans to be furnished free to school districts. A great expansion of the building program took place in the second decade with the consolidation of school districts. The General Assembly provided a special building loan fund of \$17,500,000 to be loaned to the counties for the construction of school plants, provided certain specifications were met.

The depression years curtailed the building program a great deal and the Second World War almost stopped this activity. The result being that the school plants have deteriorated and

of the building was increased from five to ten. A new
 building was developed with the adoption of an amend-
 ment to the constitution to allow income to be taxed. An
 Educational Commission was created to handle and administer
 the building program. The general purpose of the
 building program was to take over the support
 of the building program of the public schools and in doing so
 the building program was extended to other schools. The general
 purpose was also specified for financing the school pro-
 gram. The State's appropriation for the school program to
 be used for the purpose of financing the school program.
 The majority of the school buildings in 1908 were one-
 room buildings. There were a thousand of which were made of
 wood. The Legislature authorized building activities when it
 passed the bill into a law. It later
 was amended to provide for a building program of providing
 for the purpose of financing the school program. Provisions were
 made for the school building program to be provided for
 by the Legislature. A great expansion of the building program
 was made in the second decade with the consolidation of school
 districts. The General Assembly provided a special building
 fund of \$1,500,000 to be loaned to the counties for the
 construction of school plants, provided certain restrictions
 were met. The building program was a great
 success and the building program was a great
 success being that the school plants have deteriorated and

there is a great need for more school building facilities.

The average school term of seventy days in 1900 was gradually changed from time to time until it reached nine months by legislative enactment in 1943. Teachers' salaries, likewise, were increased from time to time. In 1920 a State Salary Schedule was adopted which was decreased in 1931. Following a return of prosperity, the salaries were restored, but due to higher wages in other fields a teacher shortage occurred in the State. The Legislature realizing the seriousness of the teacher shortage appropriated funds in 1947 to pay the highest teacher salaries ever paid in this State.

The sources of school revenue were changed and the amount of revenue was increased. In 1900 the amount was less than \$2,000,000 while more than \$58,000,000 has been appropriated for school purposes for the school year 1947-1948. Another change of importance to the school program was an amendment to the Constitution providing a single agency, the State Board of Education, to administer the State school program.

Evolution of the financial support of the public schools has made possible the modern conveniences and the changes in the public school program. Consolidation and transportation have been influential in the improvement and development of the educational facilities. Longer school terms, addition of the twelfth school year, improvement in teacher training, and better school buildings and equipment have greatly improved the educational opportunities of the children of the State.

CONCLUSIONS

A study of the development of and changes in the school support of North Carolina since 1900 suggest these conclusions:

1. The schools during the early part of the 19th century had made little progress due to lack of State support and educational leadership.
2. As soon as people were willing to be taxed to pay for education a rapid growth in the educational program took place.
3. The unequal distribution of wealth and the unequal educational opportunities influenced the Legislature to assist in the equalization of the support of the public school program.
4. The expansion of the school program, the increase in school attendance, taxation of general property, and the economic depression demonstrated the need for new sources of revenue.
5. Local administrative units were unable to support an educational program comparable with that in other States, especially during periods of economic crises as occurred in the early thirties. Had it not been for the State accepting the responsibility of supporting the foundation program at that time, many of the schools might have been forced to close their doors.
6. Improvement in the public school system has been made and educational opportunities have been equalized to a large extent under State support. Especially noticeable is the improvement in Negro education.
7. The adoption of a State uniform salary schedule, based

on training, experience, and educational fitness, has been a big factor in the improvement in the training of the teaching personnel.

8. If public education is to develop and achieve the high standards that it should, the State is going to have to make provisions for the payment of teachers salaries that are comparable with those of other professions of like training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

State support of the foundation program, replacing local support, in 1931, brought with it certain problems, namely: finding sufficient revenue to maintain the schools' minimum program was difficult; the improvement of the economic conditions and the outbreak of World War II caused a boost in salaries other than teachers, therefore, a teacher shortage developed; with the increasing cost of education, the present sources of revenue may not yield sufficient funds to meet the school needs; school population is increasing while the buildings are already overcrowded; there is a question as to whether the State should take over the entire responsibility of providing school buildings, and financing the auxiliary agencies; and local supplement to the State program, results in unequal educational opportunities.

Other problems have arisen. Some of which have been settled while others are still to be faced in the future. The one problem ever present is that of obtaining more revenues.

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New sources are continually being developed but in many cases the yield is still small.

As a means of securing additional funds with which to provide better facilities and supplement the educational program, it would be worth considering a tax on tobacco products. Thirty-two states are now using this source of revenue. The State of Pennsylvania, in 1946, received a total of \$16,800,000 from a tax on tobacco alone.¹

The discontinuance of the school building program during the war period, and the increase in the number of school age children, will necessitate the spending of a huge sum for this purpose in the near future. Many of the wealthier administrative units can finance such a program without difficulty while others will find it almost impossible to meet these needs with their present limited tax revenue without a measure of State support.

In order to equalize the burden and at the same time insure adequate housing for all of the schools of the State two things are recommended: First that the State participate in the building program on an equalization basis; Second, that the Legislature change the statutes so as to permit the County Commissioners within certain general limits to use the credit of the county to finance such a program, without a vote of the people.

¹United States Bureau of Census, State Tax Collection in 1946.

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1905	533	1927	147
1913	173	1931	10
1915	81	1933	562
1917	129, 192	1935	422
1919	2, 84	1937	512
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